AN APOLOGY FOR THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

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AN APOLOGY

FOR THE

RELIGIOUS ORDERS

BY

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS

Being a Translation from the Latin
Of Two of the Minor Works of the Saint

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTION, BY

THE VERY REV. FATHER JOHN PROCTER, S.T.M.

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AN APOLOGY

FOR

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS

INTRODUCTION

FOR the title which has been given to this book we are indebted to Fleury, who, writing of the first of the treatises of which it is composed, says,[1] "It was then (*i.e.* in the year 1257) that he (St. Thomas) published the APOLOGY for the Mendicant Friars which he had read the preceding year before the Pope at Anagni. This work bears the heading: *Against those who attack religion, that is, the religious profession.* In it the holy Doctor answers, in detail, and with logical precision, the reasons and authorities which were brought forward by William of St. Amour." The learned Abbé adds, "St. Thomas exposes the injustice of all the accusations brought against the religious." As the secondary, or sub-title, explains, the work which is now offered to the English reader is a translation of two of the seventy-two *Opuscula*, or minor works, of the Dominican Divine, Saint Thomas Aquinas, who in the thirteenth century was, and, indeed, in every

[1] *Histoire Ecclesiastique*, tom. v. livre 84, n. 42.

century since has been considered, one of the great theological lights of the Catholic Church.

The book is divided into two parts, each part being one of the two tracts, or *Opuscula*. These treatises were not published by the author simultaneously, and, as they now appear, in book-form. They were given to the world separately, under special circumstances, to which I shall presently refer, and which called for each at a particular time, and to meet a particular need. After the death of the Saint, they were, with seventy other tracts or booklets, treating of a variety of subjects of varied interest, collected together, and published under the somewhat comprehensive heading of "Opuscula," or the Minor Works.

The *Opuscula* on the religious life and calling have been translated, as far as I can ascertain, for the first time.[1] They are now bound together between two covers, and to them an Index is added, for the convenience of the English reading world. This book, embodying, as it does, the two treatises in defence of the religious life, can hardly fail to be of interest to many at the present time, when, as in the thirteenth century, the religious orders—in France, in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, and elsewhere—are passing through a crisis, which, though not a "new thing" in their annals, is, to say the least, searching and severe.

The religious orders do not fear—nor need they—for the ultimate triumph of their cause. The times are crucial for them—of this there can be no doubt—but, their existence is assured. They may be tried, but they will come through their trial unscathed.

[1] A translation of another *Opusculum* of St. Thomas has recently been published by Messrs. Sands and Co. under the title, *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office.*

They may pass through the water, but they will pass through dry-shod. They may be subjected to the ordeal of fire, but their garments will not be scorched by the flames. He who protected Israel will protect them. "And the water was divided. And the children of Israel went in through the midst of the sea dried up; for the water was as a wall on their right hand and on their left."[1] He who watched over His servants of old, will not be wanting to His servants now. "And the nobles, and the magistrates, and the judges, and the great men of the earth being gathered together, considered these men, that the fire had no power on their bodies, and not a hair of their head had been singed, nor their garments altered, nor the smell of fire had passed upon them."[2] What God did for Sidrach, Misach and Abdenago, He will do to-day, as He has done for His faithful children in all ages. He "hath sent His angel, and delivered His servants that believed in Him."[3] "His signs . . . are great. His wonders . . . are mighty. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His power to all generations."[4] The testimony of Nabuchodonosor is the testimony of all time.

The past is the pledge of the present, and the present is the promise of the future. The flower and the fruit are in the seed. The seed may fall upon the ground, it may be buried in the earth, it may die. The death and the burial are the harbinger of a glorious resurrection. "Unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground, it alone remaineth. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."[5] This is true of all divine institutions. Seeming death is the forecast of

[1] Exod. xiv. 21, 22. [2] Dan. iii. 94. [3] *Ibid.* 95.
[4] *Ibid.* 100. [5] John xii. 24, 25.

life. Burial is followed by resurrection. The works of God thrive upon persecution. The temples of God's raising are built upon rocks which are indestructible. Waves, and winds, and storms only prove their indestructibility. All the efforts of men are vain, when directed against a divine design, which we may not ascribe even to an effort; for effort there is not in God.

The criterion of Gamaliel, Pharisee though he was, may be taken as the test as to whether a work is the fruit of the prompting of the Divine Spirit or the outcome of a merely human inspiration. The criterion is applicable in all times, as well as in apostolic days. "And he said to them: Ye men of Israel, consider with yourselves what you are about to do with these men . . . now therefore, I say to you, refrain from these men and let them alone; for if this design or work be of men, it will fall to nothing; but, if it be of God, you are not able to destroy it: lest perchance you be found to oppose God. And they consented to him."[1] The Orders are willing to be judged from this standpoint. After centuries of life, many times multiplied, they have not "fallen to nothing." After hundreds of years of almost unceasing effort on the part of their enemies, in one land or in another, they have not been able to "destroy them." Like the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, the more they have been persecuted and oppressed, the more they have increased and multiplied. The inference which the religious draw from this incontestable fact is—rightly or wrongly—that "the work is of God."

This is why the religious orders have no sort of

[1] Acts v. 35–39.

anxiety, amidst the trials of the present, about their eventual triumph in the future, be that future far or near. Here we have the secret of their assurance. They have already successfully passed through crises in the other countries of Christendom, notably in our own, and in some of these countries not once only but many times. The result has invariably been the same. The waters have cleansed them, instead of destroying them. The fire has only separated the dross from the gold. So will it be now. So will it be always. Whatever others may think or say, this is the view taken by the religious orders themselves. Hence their confidence in their final triumph.

Persecution is the legacy of the Church, nay it is an entailed inheritance coming down to her, through the ages, from her Divine Founder. The entail has never been broken; nor will it be; nor can it be. She has to be purified in the crucible. She has to be "tried by fire as silver is tried." She has to "pass through fire and water." The legacy is incontestable. The inheritance is beyond dispute. It clearly comes from Jesus Christ. "He is like a refining fire, and like the fuller's herb: and He shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold and silver, and they shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice."[1] His promise and prophecy call for no gloss or comment, beyond the one written on every page of history. That page has been a veritable palimpsest, upon which the word PERSECUTION has been repeatedly rewritten, and then repeatedly erased, only to be written again.

The Apostles were the first to inherit the promise. St. Paul bears witness to the inheritance in language

[1] Malach. iii. 2, 3.

which the religious may repeat to-day. "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no fixed abode . . . we are reviled, and we bless; we are persecuted, and we suffer it; we are ill spoken of, and we entreat; we are made as the refuse of this world, the off-scorning of all even till now."[1] The Apostle does not write to repine or complain; he only bears witness to a fact. We "bless," "suffer," "entreat," are words which imply not surprise, but resignation to the Master's Will, and faith in the reality of the divine and prophetic promise. "Remember my word that I said to you: the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."[2] The words are the words of Jesus Christ. He had already given the reason of this enmity. "If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."[3] "When they have persecuted you in this city, flee into another," is the advice of the Master to His disciples. Then comes the promise of unfailing life, "Amen I say to you, you shall not finish all the cities of Israel till the Son of Man come."[4] These are words which have inspired confidence in the hearts of the persecuted for nearly twenty centuries. "In the world you shall have distress; but have confidence, I have overcome the world";[5] "Fear not, little flock, for it hath pleased your Father to give you a kingdom,"[6] are further words of hope, which guarantee to the persecuted ultimate and final victory.

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 11–13. [2] John xv. 20. [3] *Ibid.* 19.
[4] Matt. x. 23. [5] John xvi. 33. [6] Luke xii. 32.

The religious orders of the Church have ever been in the forefront of the battle. They have ever been the spiritual uhlans, the advanced guard of the battalions of the Church. They, consequently, must expect to bear the brunt of the enemies' lance and spear. They must not be—they are not—surprised, they are not even disappointed, much less discouraged, when they become the targets of the fiercest arrows of the foe. The surprise, the disappointment, and the discouragement, would be the other way. It would be strange were it not so; nor would it be a sign of health and spiritual vigour. If persecution in a country did not begin with the religious orders, it would, probably, be an evidence that they had fallen away from their first charity, that they lacked energy and zeal, that they were wanting in the service of God.

Sometimes persecution comes from within. "A man's enemies are those of his own household." Well-meaning, though badly advised, members of "the household of faith" have at times raised their voices against the Orders. We must admit, however, that it has not always been without a cause. "Religious" are not always religious. They do not at all times, and in all places, live up to their sacred calling. *Cucullus non facit monacum.* Practice and profession are not, invariably, one and the same, in any rank or station of life. A Judas in the college of the chosen twelve, a Nicolas amongst the deacons in apostolic days, a Julian in the early ages of the Christian faith, are historic instances, which have prepared us for the existence of occasional infidelity to the principles and practices of the higher life, amongst members of the religious orders. Religious

men and women, like other men and women, are human. This evident truism is admitting much; and yet we cannot admit less. Men and women are changeable in their resolutions. So sometimes are men and women who are religious. They are not always true to their professions. Like all corporate bodies, the members do not, invariably, in the words of the prophet, "look to the rock from which (they) are hewn," nor "to the hole of the pit out of which they are dug." They forget "Abraham (their) father," and "Sara who begot (them)." *Then* persecution, whether from without or from within, is as cleansing water and purifying fire. The cleansing and the purifying are the work of God, "whose fan is in His hand; and He will thoroughly cleanse His floor, and gather His wheat into the barn, but the chaff He will burn."[1]

There have been times, there have been countries —there may be countries to-day — where the water and the fire and the fan were, and perhaps are, needed. It is better for the body that the cancer should be removed by the surgeon's knife. It is better for the wheat, that it should be winnowed, and so be separated from the chaff. A corporate body — whether religious, social, or political — gains by the expulsion, even though forcible, of those of its members who are working against its best and highest interests. Treason is always a crime. Traitors can claim no quarter. Men who profess a religious life, and wear the livery of a religious order; and yet, under the cloak of religion, are living a life of scandal, diametrically opposed to their calling and profession, are traitors. They are siding actively

[1] Matt. iii. 12.

and aggressively with the enemy. They fall under the penalty due to treason. "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." Of one such as these Saint Augustine writes in his *Rule: Sine causa est in monasterio, etiamsi inde non projiciatur.* He is not a true monk, although he may not be ejected from his monastery. They, who, in their lives contradict their profession, have no cause to complain, either of the violence of the purification, or of the salutary result of the process of expiation. Dionysius puts it pithily: "It is not an evil thing to be punished: the evil is to deserve punishment" (De Div. Nom. Cap. IV.). They merit divine judgments, even though an Attila be the chosen "Scourge of God." We can only admit and regret the cause. We can neither palliate the offence, nor deprecate the penalty.

> "That he is mad 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity;
> And pity 'tis 'tis true."

There are, however, times when the Orders are attacked, even from within, unjustly. The cause of the attack is misunderstanding, misstatements, or misjudgment. The opposition may spring from motives which are of the world's prompting, and which come neither from the Spirit of God, nor from zeal in His cause. Jealousy was found in the home of the Apostles, of which Jesus Himself was the Head. Envy may enter into the very Sanctuary of the Lord. The spirit of the world may make its way into cloistered homes. Bolts and bars, grates and grilles, the walls of religious cells and monastic enclosures are not proof against "the spirits of darkness in the high places." The heart of a Christian is not an im-

pregnable fortress. "The breastplate of justice," as worn by men, and the "shield of faith" in human hands, are not infallibly impervious to "the fiery darts of the most wicked one." The "higher paths" are not high enough to be beyond the reach of the spirit of "the world."

These are some of the lessons that the reader will learn, if he reads between the lines, in the pages which follow these words. The pages were penned by a vigorous hand, and were directed against the unjust accusations of one, whose hand was only just less vigorous than his own, when it was moved by hatred of the religious orders—William of St. Amour. It has been said that, "there is but one step from envy to hate." We have an instance, in the historic controversy to which I am about to refer, of the truth of this saying.

The volume now offered to the English reading public—which consists of the Nineteenth and Seventeenth of the Opuscula respectively[1]—will probably prove to be of greater interest to the majority of readers, than the little book (already issued by the same publishers) on *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office.* The treatises are full of vigour and life. They were inspired by an occasion which has made history, and which might have proved fatal to the very existence of the Order to which St. Thomas himself belonged. They were written at a time which was critical in the annals of the Orders; and, without question or doubt, they, more

[1] In the Parma Edition of the *Opera Omnia* they are the first and third of the *Opuscula*, the one on the "Perfection of the Spiritual Life" being the second. All three are to be found in vol. xv. of the Parma Edition of 1874.

than anything else, were instrumental in piloting the threatened Orders through the storm. For, as all the world knows, they were the outcome of the historic controversy which arose in the year 1253, and which was championed, on the one side by William of St. Amour, and on the other by the Dominican Theologian to whom we owe this work. The controversy is an interesting one. The champions on either side were, each in their way, giants among intellectual men, each being "head and shoulders" above his fellows.

William of St. Amour was the avowed and implacable enemy of the religious Orders, nay, of the first principles of the religious life. Especially was he bitterly opposed to that form of the religious life —the double life of contemplation and action, the union of the monastic life with the apostolic life of teaching and preaching—of which the newly established Orders of the Franciscans and the Dominicans were the embodiment.

A word on the spirit and organisation of the "active orders" may not be out of place here. It will help the reader to appreciate the meaning of the struggle.

In the earlier ages—perhaps up to the thirteenth century — the office of teaching in universities and in public schools had been, for the most part, confined to laymen, or to the members of the secular clergy. The monks taught and wrote, indeed, but in their monastic homes. Preaching was one of the duties of the Episcopal office; and, although at times, and for exceptional reasons, monks, like St. Bernard, exercised the sacred ministry of the Word, this was the exception and not the rule. The Friars — the Dominicans and Franciscans especially — were instituted for the express purpose of preaching. The

former were called "the Preaching Friars," or the "Friars Preachers," and their Order received the name of "Ordo Praedicatorum," or "Order of Preachers." To the apostolate of preaching they united the monastic life. They lived by rule. They took the three vows of Voluntary Poverty, Perpetual Chastity, and Entire Obedience, in all things lawful, and "according to rule," to their superiors' will. The Franciscans were —as became the followers of "the poor man of Assisi" —extremely strict in their profession and practice of poverty. They were not allowed by rule, in the early days of their history, to "possess purse or scrip." They were forbidden to have revenues. Consequently they had to live upon alms. Hence the members of the new Orders were called "the Mendicant (or begging) Friars." Yet, withal, both Orders were to be actively engaged in apostolic and external work for souls. They were to come out of their churches, their sacristies, and their cloisters. They were to work in the world, as well as to pray in their monastic cells, for the spiritual welfare of their fellow-men.

This was the "new thing," the novelty in the Church, which provoked the storm. It was a novelty, a new development, that is, of the religious life. The old principles were there; but the application of them to a new environment was novel. In days when men lived in grooves and walked in well-beaten paths, a new departure was calculated to cause a shock. The religious life was old as Christianity; but the form of the religious life which the new Orders called into being, was passing strange to the conservatism of an essentially conservative age. The needs of the times, however, demanded the change; and the Church, who brings out of her treasures "new things and old," sanc-

tioned and approved, if she did not initiate, the evolution which responded so effectively, as events proved, to the crying need.

The blending of the active life of the apostolate with the contemplative life of the monk, formerly secluded in the cloister, was a novelty—but it was a novelty which was a need. There were Monks in the Church, and had been for centuries before the thirteenth—men, who, in the interior of the cloister, studied, and taught, and wrote, and worked, and prayed. There were priests in the Church, in that age and before, priests who laboured and toiled in God's vineyard. But something was wanting, a need was felt. What was the need? Men, uniting in themselves the "double spirit" — the spirit of the cloister and yet the spirit of priestly zeal; monks who were to be monks and yet active priests; priests who were to be active and acting priests, and yet who at the same time were to be monks; men who were to pray and study in the cloister, and then to come out of the cloister, to carry the fruit of their prayer and study into the world. Apostles were needed who, like Elias and the Baptist John, were to come from the desert to preach. Preachers were wanted who were to practise first and then preach — who were to preach by their lives, and then by their words. Teachers were called for, who were to learn in solitude, and then to teach in the pulpit and in the professor's chair. Heresy was rampant, and an Elias had to cry, "How long halt ye between two sides?" Foxes were in the vineyard laying it waste, and a Samson had to arise to destroy them. Enemies were in the camp of the Lord, and a Gedeon had to come forth in his might and put them to flight.

Such were Dominic and Francis, and such were to be the Dominicans and the Franciscans, the members, that is, of the Orders which they founded. They were to live in cloisters, recite office in choirs, study and pray in cells, fast and abstain and do penance at home. Then they were to come out, like Elias, like Samson, like Gedeon, and do battle by word and work, strengthened by fasting and prayer, against the enemies of the Lord God. This is what we mean by "the double spirit"—the "action" and "contemplation"—of the new institutions.

Another word as to the organization of the "New Orders," as they were styled in St. Thomas's day, may be of help in preparing us for the controversy. As the Orders differ in the minor details of their "Constitutions," each according to the peculiar spirit breathed into it by its founder, and the distinctive work which is the characteristic of each, I will single out that of the Dominicans, of which, as I have said, St. Thomas was a distinguished member. The old monastic institutions were, for the most part, autonomous. Each monastery was, as a rule, independent of every other. There were exceptions, no doubt; but this was the general rule. The newly established Orders were, as their work demanded, founded upon a different basis. Each convent or priory was, in a sense, independent of the others; yet they were all united to a common centre, and all were dependent upon a common head. Each had its own superior; and yet a Common Superior ruled over all. The superiors were chosen by the subjects; the subjects owed obedience to the superiors whom they themselves had chosen.

The organization of the Orders founded in the

Middle Ages ought to appeal to the spirit of the present age, it ought to come home to the minds of English-thinking and English-speaking people. It is, in a word, democratic. Its spirit is liberal. Its government is elective. The Dominican Order, for instance, spread throughout the world, has everywhere the same rule and the same laws; but, for the purpose of government, it is divided into what are called *provinces*, which are ruled by Provincials, or National Superiors. At the present time there are twenty-five such divisions or provinces, governed by twenty-five Provincials. Most countries form one distinct province; but in some countries, where Dominicans are many, there are several provinces; as in France, where there are three, and in Italy, where there are five. Each Convent or Priory in a province is governed by a Prior, who, with his Community, is subject to the Provincial. Each province, with its Provincial, its Priors, and, indeed, all its members, is subject to one supreme head, who rules over all the provinces, who is called by the old-world title of "Master-General," and who resides habitually in Rome. The Priors are elected by the Fathers of their Community, subject to the approval of the Provincial. The Provincials are chosen by the Dignitaries of the province, by the Priors, and by representatives of each Priory or house, subject to the approval of the General. The General is elected by the Provincials and others, who are chosen by the members of each province for that purpose; the election of the General being subject to the approval of the Pope. The Provincial, at stated times, makes a Visitation of each Priory, to see that the rule of the Order is kept, and that the work of the Order is

done; and the General, much less frequently, visits each province, for the same purpose.

Hence, Unity is the proud boast of the Order to which St. Thomas belonged. Centralization is the essential element of its organization. Its centralization is the secret of its unity, even as its unity was, and is, the secret of whatever of good it may have been instrumental in bringing about in the world. In the Dominican Order we see the reflected unity of the Church, which is the mother. It is the glory of the Dominicans, that, like the robe of Christ, their Order has remained seamless and undivided for nearly seven hundred years, even as has the Church for well-nigh nineteen hundred. "Non scindamus eam," the soldiers said of our Lord's garment; "Let us not cut it and divide it, but let us cast lots as to whose it shall be." Dominicans have re-echoed that word, "Let us not divide it." They have had no schism, no division, no sections. They are, and have always been, one. They have had through the ages, and have now throughout the world, one General, or supreme head, under the Pope, the lineal successor of St. Dominic, their founder; one rule, the Rule of St. Augustine, supplemented everywhere by the same constitutions; one organization, whose centre has been in Rome, and from which the Order has extended into all lands; one spirit, the "double spirit," of contemplation at home and zealous action abroad; one end and one aim—the salvation of the souls of men.

In the Dominican Order unity prevails. Why? For this reason—all are subject to authority: Friar to Prior; Friar and Prior to Provincial; Friar, Prior, and Provincial to General; Friar, Prior, Provincial, and General, all are subject, all are devotedly, un-

swervingly, loyal to the Vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter, the Pope who resides in Rome. Here is an object-lesson in unity. The secret of unity being that there is one supreme authority governing, and so uniting all, in one bond of fraternity and brotherly love, and in one system of earnest fruitful zeal.

As with the Dominican, so is it with the other Orders founded in the Middle Ages, as well as with the Orders, formally approved by the Church, which have been established in later times, on the lines of the more ancient institutions. They reflect the Church's unity, as they carry on the Church's work. As the child resembles the mother; as the piece cut out of the rock is like the stone from which it is hewn; as the clay is of the same nature as the earth-pit out of which it is dug; so the Religious Orders bear a resemblance, a filial likeness, to the Church, their mother. They do her work. They carry her messages to men. She is the spring, they the rivulets coming from the spring to irrigate the earth, and to refresh the spiritual plants and flowers. She is the tree, and they the branches through which she gives fruit to the world. She is the sun, they the rays bearing her light to men. She is the centre of the great system which makes men wonder, more than they have wondered at the Pyramids of Egypt, the Walls of Babylon, the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the other great marvels of the world; the Orders radiate from her, and acknowledge her as the centre of all.

That the supply answered to a demand, that is to say, that there was a distinct need for such Orders, combining the active with the contemplative life, with an organization such as was given to them by their founders, is evidenced by the success which followed

their institution in the thirteenth century, by their marvellous growth throughout Christendom, and by their undying life through the ages. It is seen in their existence and work in the Catholic World to-day.

We may take England as an instance—although in some other countries their growth was more rapid, and their influence more widespread. There can be no manner of doubt, that there was a definite want in the religious life of this country, which they were destined to supply.

To confine ourselves again to the Dominicans. In his own lifetime St. Dominic sent his children to our fathers in this land, then so far away. They came in 1221, settling at Oxford, and, in the same year, or the year following, founded a Convent in London. Before the year 1277 there were forty Priories in England and Wales, and the number increased to fifty-two. In London they were established, in 1221 or 1222, in Holborn, on the site now known as Lincoln's Inn Gardens. Then in 1278 a new site was obtained, and a large Priory was built, which existed till 1538, on Ludgate Hill. We may form some idea of the size of this Convent when we remember that Parliaments were held there; and that it covered the ground now occupied by the *Times* Printing Office, the Apothecaries' Hall, and the City Station of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway. It gave its name to a district, and the name still remains—*Blackfriars*. During the reign of Queen Mary, from December 1555 to July 1559, the members of the Order held the Church of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield, which has lately been restored.

Nor must we forget, all the while, that these

houses in England, although governed immediately each by its own Prior, and all by a National Superior called a Provincial, were, one and all, subject to a General Superior, who was the head of all the houses of every nation or province in the world. This subjection was not merely nominal; it was practical and real. The English Dominican Annals, preserved in the Record Office and the British Museum, bear witness to the union of the English branch with the other branches spread through the Catholic World, all the branches forming one tree with the stem which was planted in Rome. General Chapters of the entire Order were held in England under the presidency of the Master-General, who at other times, as well, exercised jurisdiction over all the houses in the land.

Blessed Jordan of Saxony, the second General of the Order, came to England in 1230, and spent some time in London and Oxford. He evidently canonically established the Province of England; for in this year the first Provincial Chapter was held at Oxford, and the canonical election of Provincials began. In 1250 Father John Wilderhusen (commonly called John the Teutonic), who was the fourth General, held the thirtieth General Chapter of the Order in the Convent of Holborn. At this Chapter more than four hundred Friars assisted from all parts of Christendom, some coming even from the Holy Land. On the first day of the Chapter the King (Henry III.) dined with the Friars. Father Humbertus Burgundus de Romanis, the fifth General, in the year 1263 held the forty-second General Chapter in London, at which, according to some of his biographers quoted by Touron, St. Thomas

Aquinas was present, to represent the Province of Rome. Father Joannes de Vercellis, the sixth General, presided over the fifty-ninth General Chapter, held at Oxford in the year 1280. King Edward I. honoured it with his presence, and the General admitted his consort, Queen Eleanor of Castille, to a participation in all the merits and good works of the Order. Father Berengarius de Landorra, the thirteenth General, held the ninetieth General Chapter in the Ludgate Convent, London, on May 26, 1314. Father Hugh de Vansseman, the sixteenth General, held the 110th General Chapter in London in the June of 1335. Thus has the Order been perpetuated, in one land or another, through the seven centuries, down to our own time. If in England there has been a break in the continuity, in other lands the hierarchical chain has remained unbroken. The system has ever been an organized system. The work has never flagged or failed. There has been no *hiatus* in the continuity, or continuous unity, of the work begun seven hundred years ago. This double historical fact of the continuous life and the unbroken unity of the Orders, dispenses with the need of arguments to prove that the new form of religious life, which dates from the thirteenth century, was called for by the exigencies of that and the succeeding ages.

The reader having realised the spirit, the work, and the organization of the active Orders, and having formed his own opinion of their undoubted need in the Catholic World, will be the better able to understand the justice or injustice of the war which was waged against them.

No one will attempt to deny, that, however unreasonable the opposition, it was not to be wondered

at, that opposition there should be. The new development of religious life, was, undoubtedly, an innovation in the history of the Orders. It had, nevertheless,—and we must ever bear this in mind —the full approval of the Church. The Orders were "confirmed" by the Sovereign Pontiffs. Their rules and constitutions were sanctioned by the Holy See. They received their commission to "go and teach," and to "preach the Gospel," from the Vicar of Jesus Christ. The spirit of the motto of the Dominicans, *Laudare, benedicere et praedicare* (to praise, to bless, and to preach), which gave the key-note to their life, had the warmest approval of the Ecclesiastical Authorities of the time.

It was an innovation, it is true; but the times called for an innovation. It was a revolution, if you will, but a revolution in the true sense of the word, and not in the sense in which it is often used in our own day. It was evolution — revolution without the r. We call a fundamental change in an organization or a government, or a radical change in a way or mode of life, a revolution. There are revolutions which are conducive to good, as well as revolutions which are upheavals, and which are subversive of order, and creators of anarchy and confusion. A revolution which is approved by legitimate authority, which is for the higher good of the community, which tends to the amelioration of society, which upholds the principles of morality, and which is subject to "the powers that be," is, without doubt, a good and not an evil. Such was the revolution to which we refer. It was an evolution of the Gospel maxims and precepts. It was a return to the apostolic times. "Go and teach";

"Preach the Gospel to every living creature"; "Go, sell all thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow Me," were words which were spoken to priests in the first Age. They were spoken to priests again in the thirteenth. The priests were members of Religious Orders, but they were priests all the same. The revolution consisted in this, that the religious, in the expressive words of the Dominican rule, were not only to "contemplate," but they were in future "to give to others the fruits of their contemplation,"[1] because, as the great St. Gregory says, "Teaching and preaching are to be preferred to simple contemplation."

It was against this change, ostensibly, though, in reality, it was against the fundamental principles of all religious life, that William of St. Amour, the gifted Doctor of the Sorbonne, raised his voice and devoted his pen, and made use of the influence which his position and undoubted, though probably exaggerated, talents gave him. Abelard, more than a century before, in the days of St. Bernard, had written against the Orders, but St. Amour went far beyond Abelard in his attacks upon them. The brilliant and erratic Abelard wore a religious habit, for a time, himself. He only attacked the Orders incidentally, as it were by a side thrust of his lance. Indeed it was principally against the abuses, and not the life itself, that he inveighed. But St. Amour, the violent and turbulent Doctor of the Sorbonne, aimed at the very heart of the religious system. He smote with a vengeance, and with a vengeance begotten of hate. His pen was of wormwood, his ink was of gall. His tongue was as a sword of

[1] *Constit. Fratrum Praedicatorum*, Prolog. Decl. i.

fire. In his private conversations, and in his public utterances—notably in a sermon entitled, *De Publicano et Pharisaeo* (Of the Publican and the Pharisee) —his words were as words of fire. Were it possible, they would have burnt into the very vitals of the religious state. It was war to the death. St. Thomas, realising the deadly effort of the inveterate foe of the Orders, sums it up in the expressive words of the eighty-second Psalm, with which he begins his Apology or Defence. "For lo, thy enemies have made a noise: and they that hate thee have lifted up their head. They have taken a malicious counsel against thy people, and have consulted against thy saints. They have said: come and *let us destroy them, so that they be not a nation; and let the name of Israel be remembered no more.*" And later on he cites the words of Queen Esther's plaintive prayer: "Our enemies resolve *to destroy us* and to *extinguish thine inheritance.*"

St. Amour wrote a treatise DE VALIDO MENDICANTE in which are to be found many errors, and misstatements, both of fact and of doctrine. His principal work, however, was one to which he gave the title "*De Periculis Novissimorum temporum*" (The Perils of the last times). This book, and his *Collectiones Sacrae Scripturae*, to which I shall presently refer (and which was only a *réchauffé* of the former work), together with his bitter, sarcastic words, were a determined attempt to destroy the recently established Orders, and especially that of the Dominicans. For, although he professed to treat the question of Religious Orders in the abstract, and, although he protested that he did not wish to condemn any Order approved by the Church, it is

evident and beyond doubt, that his poisoned arrows were aimed at the Franciscans and Dominicans, the latter especially, who at that time had gained an undoubted influence amongst rich and poor, learned and illiterate, with the people, and even at royal courts.

The popularity of the New Orders had appealed to the jealousy of many. The influence of the Friars, and the respect which they commanded, were the secret of the storm that was raised against them. It is the repetition of history. History repeats itself again today. The Friars had made their mark in the seats of learning, as well as in the villages and towns. They were occupying Professorial Chairs, and that too with distinction—chairs of philosophy, theology, Canon Law and Scripture—in the great universities of Catholic Christendom. Even in the lifetime of St. Dominic,[1] we find them at the Universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, and Toulouse. Their lectures and sermons attracted large audiences.

Besides their reputed learning, they had the charm of novelty.

> "Of all the passions that possess mankind,
> The love of novelty rules most the mind."

Men then, as now, and as in all times, made a fetish of novelty. The Athenians and the strangers were not singular, when, as we are told in the Acts of the Apostles, "they were employed in nothing else but either in telling or hearing something new."[2] The search for novelty is a craving of nature. We may call it an inborn passion of the human mind. It is a moving principle. It is one of the secrets of progress.

[1] He died A.D. 1221. [2] Ch. xvii. 21.

"Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandments all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain"

is the pledge of every age, not to the ghost of the past, but to the actuality of the present hour.

Novelty, however, was not, by any means, the only recommendation of the Friars to the men of thought of the thirteenth century. They had learning. They had piety. There were amongst them distinguished men, men of mark, men who were giants amongst their fellows, men, who, to learning and science wedded sanctity of purpose, and holiness of life. They were known to be men of distinction, as well as holy men.

Blessed Albert the Great, the master of St. Thomas, was called "the Great" even in his lifetime—"great in philosophy, greater in theology, greatest in natural science," as the old chronicler pithily puts it. It is on record, that, when he lectured in Paris, his audience outgrew the largest hall in the city; so that he had to address the multitude of his disciples in an open square, which, from this incident, was afterwards called "Place Maubert," *i.e.* the square of "Maître (Master) Albert." Raymund of Penafort, the venerable canonist, who, after Gratian, was the first to systematise the common, or canon-law, of the Church, was distinguished not merely by his wisdom and learning, but by his miracles and sanctity. He, thus, gained for himself not only the name of "the Counsellor of Kings," but the still nobler title of "Saint." The Franciscan, St. Bonaventura, who is called "the 'Seraphic' Doctor," as St. Thomas is called "the Angelic," by his brilliant

eloquence, his learned writings, and the simplicity of his holy life, won, not only the minds, but the hearts of many. Of St. Thomas himself we need not speak. His learning, his clear yet subtle mind, his eloquence, and the charm of his saintly life were irresistible. Add to these well-known names, many others of the twin-orders, and it is not difficult to realise and explain the jealousy of the men, whose minor lights were dimmed by the brilliancy of the greater orbs. As St. Thomas expresses it, "Major lux offuscat minorem," the greater light obscures the lesser. The lesser light does not love the obscuration. *Hinc illae lacrymae.* They could not gainsay the teaching of the Friars; so they attacked, not their doctrine, not their life as religious, merely, but the very principles upon which the life was based. They essayed to sap the foundation upon which the new Orders rested. No one was more persistent in his efforts than William of St. Amour. He was, as we have seen, the chief and the champion of the enemies of the religious life and calling.

Natalis Alexander, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*,[1] gives us a *résumé* of the principal propositions sustained by St. Amour in his chief work, "The perils of the last times." This summary will serve as a key to the line of argument adopted by the Angelic Doctor in the treatise in defence of the Orders. The title of St. Amour's book is, evidently, suggested by the words of St. Paul to Timothy,[2] "Know also that, *in the last days*, shall come *dangerous times:* men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers . . . having an appear-

[1] Tom. xv. saec. xiii. et xiv. cap. iii. art. 7, p. 177. (Edit. Paris, 1744).

[2] 2nd Ep. iii. 1–7.

ance indeed of piety, but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid." "They are always learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth." "They resist the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate as to the faith." These men are, according to St. Amour, the friars of the New Orders. He warns the faithful against them, as the Apostle warned his faithful disciple against the evil doers of the last times. He protests against the life they are leading, nay against the first principles of that life. They are aspiring to a work which is beyond their calling. They are leading a life of external apostolic work, which is incompatible with the duties of the religious state. Even though appointed by the Pope, and approved by Bishops, they have no right to preach, unless they are invited to do so by the people. Others may preach, but not religious; for this derogates from the rights of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. They are not "sent" by God; and "how can they preach unless they be sent?" They ought to live by the work of their hands, and not by preaching. Neither should they be mendicants. There is danger in this; they become flatterers, and worse. It is no sign of perfection to leave all for Christ, and then to follow Christ as mendicants. If they leave all for Christ, they must either remain in a monastery, or else support themselves, not by teaching and preaching, but by corporal work. Even though they be permitted by the Church to beg, it is unlawful so to do, being opposed to the teaching of the Apostle. If they receive alms in return for their preaching, they are guilty of simony. Neither must they lecture in places where laymen lecture (*i.e.* at the Universities), for they ought to follow

the counsels; and one of the counsels given by Our Lord is, "Be not ye called Rabbi (or Master)." If, then, they disobey this counsel, they sin, and give scandal; and so they ought to be avoided. They must not wear common garments (evidently a reflection upon the Franciscans). The Roman Pontiffs cannot give leave to all the members of an Order to preach and hear confessions, anywhere and everywhere, without limit or condition. The See of Rome was (he said) unwise in approving of so many mendicant Orders. Finally, he accused the members of the Orders of being false preachers, hypocrites, and idlers.

Such, in brief, was the teaching of William of St. Amour in his "De Periculis Novissimorum temporum." St. Thomas had no reason to complain when this work appeared, that the challenge with which he ends his tract "On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life" had not been accepted. "It will please me," he wrote,[1] "if someone will answer what I have said. For, there is no more satisfactory way of teaching truth and of refuting error, than by discussion." He quoted the words of the Book of Proverbs,[2] "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." The Saint adds, significantly: "God Himself will judge between us and them." The "answer" came and with it the opportunity "of teaching truth and refuting error by discussion." Iron sharpened iron, and a man sharpened the countenance of his friend.

Happily for the Friars, there was a David at hand to meet this "Goliath from the camp of the Philis-

[1] Cap. xxvi. p. 102 (Edit. Parma, 1864), English translation, page 164 (*The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office*).

[2] xxvii. 17.

tines." "David made haste and ran to the fight to meet the Philistine." "Let not any man's heart be dismayed (he said), I thy servant will go, and will fight against the Philistine."[1] The David "was a young man, ruddy, and of comely complexion." "Young man" though he was, "dumb ox" though he had been called, he had already made his name. The forecast of the Great Albert had been realised —the bellowing of the dumb ox had been heard throughout Christendom. If William of St. Amour took up the pen which Abelard, a century and a half before, had, in the hour of his repentance, cast from him; St. Thomas wielded, with deadly effect, the pen which had fallen from the emaciated hand of the dying St. Bernard.

The saintly King Lewis of France, a life-long friend and generous patron of the Friars, sent the work of St. Amour to the Holy See. He commissioned two doctors of theology to proceed to Anagni, where the Pope with the Papal Court was then residing, to protest against the errors it contained, and to defend the interests of the Religious Orders. St. Bonaventure went as the representative of the Franciscans. Several Dominicans were, also, deputed to take part in the discussion. Pope Alexander IV., who in the year 1254 had succeeded Innocent IV., appointed two commissions to examine, and report upon the work. One commission consisted of four Cardinals—viz. Hugh of St. Caro, Eudes de Châteauroux, John di Ursine, and John Francioge. The second commission was, by order of the Holy Father, to be composed of members of the Dominican Order. The General of the Order

[1] 1 Kings xvii.

(Humbert de Romanis — the fifth in succession to St. Dominic) was instructed to see that St. Thomas Aquinas should be one of the body. Needless to say that William of St. Amour with a strong party of his followers, amongst them being an Englishman with the un-English name of Jean de Gectville, then Rector of the Paris University, set out for Anagni to defend himself and his work, and to ventilate his grievances against the Friars. They arrived, however, only in time to see the book of St. Amour in the fire.

Till this moment, as far as I can ascertain, St. Thomas had taken no part in the controversy. He seems to have, designedly, kept aloof from the fray; for his tract on "the Perfection of the Spiritual Life," as the reader will have seen, is not of a controversial kind. Even when, on a certain Palm Sunday, the University beadle appeared in the Church of St. Jacques in Paris as the Saint was preaching, and, commanding him to be silent, read aloud a long list of complaints against the Religious, it is on record, that, when the reading was over, without referring to the interruption, he peacefully and calmly continued his sermon. But now, at the voice of obedience, he suspended his lectures and sermons, and immediately repaired to Anagni, to take his part in the historic commission, so vital in its consequences to the future of the Religious Orders.

The account of this visit is given by Touron,[1] to whom we are indebted for many of the interesting details in the history of this controversy. It reveals the sanctity at once and the simplicity, together with the deep learning, the wide reading, and the

[1] *La Vie de S. Thomas d'Aquin*, livre ii. chap. ix. p. 129. (Edit. Paris, 1740.)

prodigious memory of the Angelic Doctor. Albert the Great and Saint Bonaventure were already at Anagni. A crisis was imminent; it was necessary to summon the great defenders of the Church. When St. Thomas arrived, the General of the Dominicans called the brethren together, for they had a Priory in the town. Singling out our saint from the rest, he thus addressed him, in the presence of the assembled brethren: "See, my son; the Order of St. Dominic is attacked by enemies who are most powerful. Its honour appears now to be entrusted to your light and your zeal. Take this book which has raised such a storm against us, and which seems to threaten the peace of the Church, and to prevent, in part at least, the fruits of our life of preaching, and the good example which we may show by a spotless life. Read it. Examine it. See, before God, what we are to say in reply, in order to put an end to this scandal. I unite my prayers to the command which comes to you from the Vicar of Jesus Christ."

St. Thomas, taking the book from the General's hands, asked the prayers of the assembled Friars, and then retired to his cell. There he prayed for light, according to his wont. He made an act of humility before God. Then, with his keen, piercing intellect, he carefully examined it. He easily perceived the weak points, the arguments which were spurious, the reasoning which was wanting, the apparent conclusions which, in reality, did not result from the premises, and the fallacies and subtilties upon which the chief arguments of William of St. Amour were founded. When the Chapter assembled the following morning, St. Thomas reassured his anxious brethren. "Fear not (he said). Have

confidence in God. The book which has so alarmed you, will not do the harm that you imagine. God has shown me how false, how captious, how full of errors it is. With the help of the Lord, we can clearly show its falsity, its speciousness, its errors, and its flagrant abuse of the words of Scripture and the writings of the Holy Fathers."

"David made haste, and ran to the fight, to meet the Philistine." His sword was his pen, his shield the Word of God, his buckler the writings of the doctors of the Church. After a few days, we are told, he appeared before the Sovereign Pontiff and the Papal Court. He argued with such marvellous clearness, reasoned with such convincing closeness, dismissed the objections of St. Amour with such consummate skill, that the triumph of the cause of the Religious Orders, was, from that moment, assured. The members of the Commission of Cardinals, to which I have already referred, submitted the report of their discussions to the Holy Father. Natalis Alexander[1] tells us, that this entirely coincided with the conclusions of St. Thomas. They informed the Sovereign Pontiff that there were in the "Perils of these latter days," many things against the power and authority of the Holy See, and the teaching of the Church. They assured His Holiness that it was a dangerous book, and one which must give scandal; and that it was calculated to do harm to souls.

The next act was, practically, the final one in the drama. It ended, to all intents and purposes, the great controversy which had convulsed Catholic Europe. On the fifth day of October, 1256,

[1] *Historia Ecclesiastica*, saec. xiii. et xiv. tom. xv. p. 178, (Edit. Paris, 1744).

Alexander IV. issued a Bull, in which he declared that, "We, by Apostolic Authority, hereby reprobate and condemn the book called TRACTATUS DE PERICULIS TEMPORUM NOVISSIMORUM as unjust, wicked, and execrable." He ordered that within eight days it should be burned; and he forbade its further publication. In a letter to King Lewis of France, the Holy Father informed him of the condemnation. He, at the same time, commended the Friars to his protection, begging of him "to receive them with his usual grace and kindness, as the well-proved and accepted ministers of Christ, and to guard them against all injuries and molestations."[1] The Pope wrote, also, to several Bishops, and amongst them to the Bishop of Paris, desiring them to threaten and visit with suspension, excommunication, and deprivation of benefices any who should uphold the errors of William of St. Amour.[2] The Friars were to be received at the Universities, St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure being mentioned by name, as Masters or Professors.

William of St. Amour, on the other hand, "a quarrelsome man, and one who is obstinate in his perversity," was forbidden to teach at the Paris University, or even to enter France. In the year 1263, however, Pope Urban IV. withdrew the latter prohibition. It must be borne in mind by those to whom this command of the Pope may seem an extreme measure, hardly justified by the circumstances of the case, that St. Amour was a beneficed cleric, and, consequently subject to the Pope, and that his presence in France was, at the time, calculated to foment trouble and promote discord. Banishment from a kingdom is, after all, a salutary,

[1] Natalis Alexander, *ibid.* p. 179. [2] *Ibid.*

as well as a penal measure. It would be well perhaps, for England, if, in punishment of certain offences which are subversive of social order—such as treason, anarchy, and the inciting to sedition and crime—the penalty in vogue in olden times were revived. *Salus populi suprema lex.* Aristotle says (12 *Ethic*), in words quoted by our author, that, "Punitive measures are, at times, remedial." We cut out a cancer from the body, we lop a rotten branch from a tree, to protect the body, and to save the tree. Nature's laws are God's laws. We shall not be far wrong if we frame our human laws according to the divine ideal. At any rate, William of St. Amour was, for a time, banished from the land in which he had sown the seeds of discord, lest he should perhaps sow where he had not as yet sown, or reap where he had already sown.

After the condemnation of their leader, his followers, for the most part, left him. His influence waned. His power was broken. They subscribed to the conditions laid down by the Holy See. They pledged themselves no longer to oppose the Friars. They promised to receive them as Professors at the University. They accepted, as fully approved by the Church, and worthy of all respect, the twin-orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic. Peace was restored. The controversy seemed to be at an end.

William of St. Amour, however, "the quarrelsome man, obstinate in his perversity," was, though silenced, not convinced. During his retirement in his family seat at St. Amour, a village of Burgundy, to which after his condemnation he repaired, he brooded over his failure. The fire of passion and hate had not gone out; it was still smouldering in

his breast. "Ten years after," Touron tells us,[1] "it seemed as though he were anxious to return to the fray." He presented to the Pope (Clement IV.) what professed to be another book on the subject of the Orders. The work bore the title "*Collectiones Sacrae Scripturae.*" It was in reality his old book "De Periculis" under another name, and in a different form. If the hands were the hands of Esau, the voice was the voice of Jacob. Clement IV. wrote, in reply, to his "beloved son, Master William of Saint Amour," a letter dated, Viterbo the eighteenth of October 1266.[2] In this epistle he quoted, and applied to St. Amour — or, at least, warned him against the possibility of their application —the words of Faustus to St. Paul, "Thou art beside thyself. Much learning hath made thee mad." "We have looked into the little book which you have sent to us (the Pope continues), which, although it occasionally varies from it, is really very like the old one (*licet interdum alias oras circumeat, veterem tamen multum sapit*)." The Pontiff goes on to say that, "although it is differently coloured, it is evident, that the substance of the first book is there." He promises to read the entire work, and to show it to other "lovers of truth"; and then to reply more fully.

One of the "lovers of truth" to whom it was shown was St. Thomas. Having examined the new *brochure*, the Holy Dominican Doctor found nothing new in it except the form—no new argument which had not been met, no new objection which had not been solved, no new proposition which had not been weighed. And so, in the words of Touron, "he

[1] *La Vie de S. Thomas*, p. 132. (Edit. Citat.)
[2] Natalis Alexander, *loc. cit.* p. 181.

thought it sufficient to revise and republish the discourse which he had pronounced at Anagni in presence of Pope Alexander IV." Fleury is of opinion that it was puplished then for the first time. This discourse — probably amplified by the Saint after its delivery—is the tract "Against those who attack the Religious State," which makes up the first part of this volume.

The treatise "Against those who deter others from entering the Religious Life," which constitutes the second part of this English translation, was, apparently, written shortly afterwards. In the former work, as will be seen, the nature of the religious life is explained, its work defined, its principles and practices defended, its external apostolate of teaching and preaching upheld, and the objections and difficulties of its enemies refuted. It is, as has been said, "An Apology" for the Religious Orders, especially of the "Active" Orders, as they are called, in contradistinction to the Monastic, or purely "Contemplative," Orders, the members of which live in monasteries a life of seclusion and prayer.

Of the second work, the title suggests the object and scope. It is written in praise of the religious state. It treats of vocations to the religious life, and of those who may, and those who may not, embrace it. It answers several questions which sometimes puzzle directors and penitents in our own times, as to whether the young, whether recent converts, whether sinners who are, however, prepared to forsake their habits of sin, may become religious. The wisdom of binding oneself by vows is discussed; and the circumstances under which vows are either sanctioned and encouraged or disapproved and condemned, are laid

down. Community or common-life, and religious poverty, are considered, with St. Thomas's usual precision, and calm, dispassionate reasoning. All this is done with a wealth of imagery, and an abundance of quotations from the Scriptures, the Fathers, and ecclesiastical hagiography, which are peculiar, even amongst the doctors of the Church, to the one who is called "the Angelic." The object of the treatise is, clearly, to encourage religious vocations, and to condemn those who would prevent Christians from entering the religious Orders of the Church. The tract ends, like the first one which appeared recently in an English translation,[1] with a challenge. "These are the things which I have felt called upon to write against the erroneous and pestiferous doctrine of those who would hold people back from entering religion. If anyone wishes to contradict what I have said, let him not chatter (*non garriat*) before children; rather let him write and let him publish his writing, that men of intelligence may judge of the truth, and that the error, if such there be, may be corrected by the authority of truth."[2]

This is the subject matter, in brief, of the volume which is now offered to the thoughtful student, and to the unbiassed judgment of intelligent men and women of the English-speaking world. It is the Catholic *résumé* of Catholic teaching, upon a subject, which has ever had a fascination for the English-thinking mind. It is written, too, by one who speaks as one having both experience and authority, one of the lights of the Catholic Church as well as a member of a religious order.

[1] *The Religious State, The Episcopate, and the Priestly Office* (Sands and Co.).

[2] Chap. xvi.

From the day when St. Augustine and his companions landed on our Kentish shores—perhaps even before—monks and nuns have ever found a home on English soil. In Ireland they have always entered into the very life and history of the people. Into the new world they came with Columbus. The ship that bore the great explorer to the far-off, and, till then, unknown, shores, carried the religious in like manner. A Dominican, a Franciscan, and a member of the Order of Mercy took possession of the New-found-land, with the great Admiral who will be famous to all time. The life of the religious man and the religious woman has always appealed, with unfailing and unerring accuracy, to Saxon and Celt alike, and to all who speak and read our common mother-tongue. Many have embraced it; more have admired it; few, comparatively, have decried it. Our historians have written about it; our poets have sung its praise; our very novelists have found in it a prolific theme.

This clear, and well-reasoned defence of that life and its principles, will be welcomed by many, especially at the present hour, when English-speaking people are opening their arms and their large generous hearts, in offering hospitality, once again, as they did in the early years of the past century and at the end of the preceding one, to those who are, once more, being driven from their own inhospitable shores. For, though the two treatises which make this a volume, were written nearly seven hundred years ago, they still have a living actuality which appeals to the present time. The religious life, like the Church which gave it birth, is as unchanged, as unchanging, and

as unchangeable, as is its Mother. Its principles are the same. They vary neither jot nor tittle. The only variety is, in their application to the needs of the times, and to the varying conditions and circumstances of men.

The words of St. Thomas will come home with special force, I venture to think, to our English-speaking race which boasts of its fairness, and professes to give "a fair field," even if it refuses its "favour." St. Thomas is nothing, if not fair. The late Most Reverend Roger Bede Vaughan, O.S.B., in his valuable life of the Saint,[1] writes of him, "He confronts his adversary fairly in the field. He states their arguments with honesty and force. He slurs nothing over. He meets each allegation point by point. If a false principle be stated, he throws the light of truth upon it and exhibits all its hollowness. If a fallacy is advanced, he makes it collapse by touching it with the point of genuine logic. If error be pushed forward, dressed in the garb of truth, he applies his test, and, dividing each from each, rejects the one, and takes the other under his protection. And, finally, after having slain the enemy, he then proceeds to do what is still more important than mere destruction—to establish upon a deep and broad basis of truth, that system which he had undertaken to defend against attack." The student of the Works of St. Thomas will, unhesitatingly, endorse every word of this eloquent testimony. Every reader of the pages which follow these words, will, without doubt, subscribe to that endorsement, so far, at least, as this volume represents the mind and spirit of the Saint.

[1] *S. Thomas of Aquin: His Life and Labours*, vol. i. p. 749.

The same biographer of St. Thomas, the learned Benedictine Archbishop, whose words I have just quoted, applies the general remark to the treatises —or rather to one of them—which are now introduced to the reader. I commend his words to anyone to whom the subject, or the subject matter, or the form in which it is presented, may, perchance, appear but little attractive. "In reading the '*Contra impugnantes*'" (he writes) "it is impossible not to be struck by the completeness with which the Holy Doctor answered all the accusations —or, rather, calumnies and slanders—of his adversary. He not only reduced him to powder in his main reply, but he pursued him into all details and through all *minutiæ;* and he does not let one argument escape thorough refutation and complete exposition. The knowledge of Scripture is here very remarkable. Students in those days were without the facilities which are possessed in these. St. Thomas could not refer to carefully composed concordances and dictionaries. Still, he is never at a loss. Then, his ingenuity of proof; his clear, deep incision of argument; his well-measured phrase; his calm unruffled advance; the grand balance of his mind which reigns throughout, speak of two things; they say that he is a doctor, and they say that he is a saint. Solidity, force, modesty, unimpassioned power, brilliancy, and depth are manifested here. He never says too much; and yet he has the constant art of not saying too little. It would repay any student who has a love for logic, to make himself master of the entire treatise."[1]

JOHN PROCTER, O.P.

[1] *S. Thomas of Aquin: His Life and Labours*, vol. i. p. 720.

Part I.

AGAINST THOSE WHO ATTACK THE RELIGIOUS STATE AND PROFESSION

Opusculum XIX. (in the Parma Edition Opusculum I.)

PROLOGUE

THE AUTHOR EXPLAINS HIS INTENTION IN UNDERTAKING THIS WORK

"Lo, thy enemies have made a noise: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken malicious counsel against thy people, and have consulted against thy Saints. They have said: 'Come, and let us destroy them, so that they be not a nation; and let the name of Israel be remembered no more'" (Ps. lxxxii.).

Almighty God, the Lover of mankind, makes use of us, as St. Augustine says (Book I., *De doctrina Christiana*), both for the sake of His own goodness, and for our advantage. He makes use of us for His own goodness, that man may glorify Him. "Every one that calleth upon My name, I have created him for My glory" (*Isa. xliii.* 3). He, likewise, makes use of us for our own advantage, in order that He may give salvation to all. "Who will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4). At the birth of Our Lord, an angel proclaimed this harmony between God and man, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will" (St. Luke ii. 14).

But, although God, who is Almighty, could, of Himself alone, have caused man to glorify Him, and to obtain salvation, He has willed, that a certain order should be preserved in this work of salvation. Con-

sequently He has appointed ministers, by whose labours the twofold end of man's creation[1] is to be accomplished. These ministers are rightly spoken of as "God's coadjutors" (1 *Cor. iii.* 9). But Satan strives, in his jealousy, to hinder both the Divine glory and the salvation of mankind. He, in like manner, endeavours to effect his purpose, by means of his ministers, whom he incites to persecute the servants of God. The emissaries of Satan show clearly, that they are the enemies both of God, whose glory they endeavour to frustrate, and of man, against whose salvation they wage war. More especially do they show themselves hostile to the ministers of God, whom they persecute. "They have persecuted us; and they please not God; they are adversaries to all men" (1 *Thess. ii.* 15). On this account, the Psalmist, in the verse which we have quoted, enumerates three points.

First, he mentions the hatred borne by the ministers of Satan to God. "Lo, thy enemies have made a noise," *i.e.*, they who, formerly, spoke secretly against Thee, fear not, now, to oppose Thee publicly. The Gloss tells us, that these words refer to the days of Antichrist, when, the enemies of the Lord, being no longer subdued by fear, will cry out against Him aloud. And, as their clamour will be an unreasoning tumult, it is spoken of as a *noise*, rather than a voice. They will not, however, manifest their hatred of God by sound only, but also by deeds. "They that hate thee have lifted up their head," *i.e.*, Antichrist, as the Gloss says. And not only Antichrist, the head himself, but likewise his members, who are heads under his head, and being governed by him as their head, are

[1] *i.e.*, the glory of God, and the salvation of men.—EDITOR.

able, so much the more efficaciously, to persecute the saints of God.

Secondly, the Psalmist points out, how Antichrist and his ministers wage war against the whole human race. Hence, he adds, "They having taken malicious counsel against thy people"; or, according to another version: "They have devised crafty things, that they may deceive them." This reading agrees with the words of Isaias (iii. 12), "O my people, they that call thee blessed, the same deceive thee." They deceive, as the Gloss adds, "with flattering words."

Thirdly, David shows how the ministers of Satan persecute the servants of God. For, he continues, "they have consulted against thy saints," "not" (as the Gloss points out), "against men of moderate virtue, but even against heavenly men." Hence, St. Gregory (XIII. Lib. Moral.), expounding the words of Job (xvi. 11), "they have opened their mouths upon me; they have reproached me," etc., says: "The reprobate, chiefly, persecute those men in the Holy Church whom they judge likely to be of service to many." The Saint further adds, "These enemies of God deem themselves to have performed a great deed, if they can destroy the life of the preachers of the Gospel." They nourish two designs against the Saints. First, they wish to sweep them from the face of the earth. "Our enemies resolve to destroy us, and extinguish thy inheritance" (*Esth. xiii.* 15). Secondly, the ministers of Satan desire, if they cannot succeed in slaying the preachers of the Gospel, at least to ruin their good name among men, that, so, their words may produce no fruit. "Do not the rich oppress you by might? Do not they blaspheme the good name that is invoked upon you?" (*James ii.* 6). Now, the Psalmist alludes to the first

of these wicked designs, in these words: "Come" (for, "thus," as the Gloss says, "these reprobates summon their accomplices"), "let us destroy them" (*i.e.*, "the Saints"), "so that they be not a nation." These words the Gloss understands to mean, "let us destroy them, that they be not among the nations: *i.e.*, let us destroy them from the world. This is the persecution of Antichrist." David makes allusion to this second design of Satan against the preachers of the Gospel, in the words, "Let the name of Israel be remembered no more," meaning by this, as the Gloss explains, let their name be held in no esteem by such as consider themselves the true children of Israel.

In former days, tyrants sought to rid the world of the Saints by violence. St. Paul writes that he saw the literal accomplishment of the verse of the Psalm, "for thy sake we are put to death all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter" (*Rom. viii.* 36). But, in our day, the enemies of God's work aim at this indeed, but rather by cunning counsels, devised especially against religious, who, by word and example, may spread throughout the world the perfection which they profess.[1] Their persecutors refuse to furnish them with certain necessaries of life. They, further, withdraw from them spiritual solace. They impose on them again, bodily hardship, in the hopes, that their condition may, thus, be rendered burdensome, and ignominious, and that they may, finally, cease to exist.

First, their enemies endeavour, as far as they can, to deprive religious of the means of study and of becom-

[1] St. Thomas refers to William of St. Amour and his supporters. In this and the following chapter, he recapitulates the propositions sustained by St. Amour, chiefly in his "De periculis temporum novissimorum," which he afterwards proceeds in the succeeding chapters to refute. See *Introduction*, page 26.—EDITOR.

ing learned, in order that they may be unable either to confute the adversaries of the truth, or to draw spiritual consolation from the Scriptures. This was the cunning practised by the Philistines. "The Philistines had taken this precaution; lest the Hebrews should make them swords or spears" (1 Kings xiii. 19). The Gloss interprets this passage as signifying the prohibition to study. This mode of persecution was first practised against the Christians by Julian the Apostate, as we read in Ecclesiastical history.

Secondly, the enemies of religious seek to prevent their consorting with learned men, in order, that, thus, their life may fall into disrepute. "And that no man might buy or sell, but he that hath the character or the name of the beast" (Apoc. xiii. 17), by consenting that is to their malice.

Thirdly, these same malicious men seek to hinder religious from preaching, and from hearing Confessions, by which means they might effect much good to souls. "Prohibiting us to speak to the Gentiles, that they may be saved" (1 *Thess. ii.* 16).

Fourthly, they seek to oblige religious to labour with their hands, that so they may become weary of, and be disgusted with, their state of life; and that they may be impeded in the discharge of their spiritual functions. They were anticipated in this device by that King Pharao, who said, "Behold the people of the children of Israel are numerous and stronger than we. Come let us wisely oppress them." . . . "Therefore," it is added, "he set over them masters of the works" (*Exod. i.* 9). According to the Gloss, "Pharao means Zabulum who imposes a heavy yoke of earth signifying the labour of tilling the soil."

Fifthly, the enemies of religious malign them, and blaspheme against their perfection, *i.e.* the poverty of the Mendicant Orders. "Many shall follow their luxuries; through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (2 *Peter ii.* 2). The Gloss understands by "the way of truth," good works.

Sixthly, as far as they are able, they try to deprive religious of alms, and of all other means of subsistence. "And as if these things were not enough for him," writes St. John, "neither doth he himself receive the brethren; and them that receive them he forbiddeth" (3 *Ep. John*).[1] The Gloss thus comments on these words, "And, as if these things were not enough for him," *i.e.*, as if it did not suffice him to dissuade others from exercising hospitality, "neither doth he himself receive the brethren," *i.e.* the indigent, "and them that receive them he forbiddeth," *i.e.* he forbids them to give assistance to those in want.

Seventhly, the ministers of Satan endeavour to tarnish the reputation of the Saints; and that, not only by word, but by letters, sent to all parts of the world. "From the prophets of Jerusalem, corruption is gone forth into all the land" (Jer. xxiii. 13). St. Jerome, expounding this text, says, "These words are our testimony against those who send forth into the world letters, full of lies, and deceit, and perjury, wherewith to pollute the ears of them that hear them." For, it is not enough for the servants of the devil to nourish themselves with their own malice, or to injure those at hand, but they must needs strive to defame their enemies, and spread their blasphemies against them over the entire globe.

[1] An allusion to the heretic Diotrephes. See p. 211.—EDITOR.

In our attempt to check the calumnies of these foul tongues, we shall proceed in the following order.

First, as their malice seems entirely directed against religious, we shall show what the religious life is, and wherein its perfection consists.

Secondly, we shall demonstrate the worthlessness and folly of the reasons which their enemies adduce against the religious.

Thirdly, we shall point out that the accusations brought against religious are calumnious.[1]

[1] S. Thomas here divides this work into three parts. (1) The first part is the shortest, and consists of the first chapter only. (2) The second part contains six chapters, *i.e.* Chapter ii. to Chapter vii. (3) The remaining Chapters (viii. to xxviii.) constitute the third part of the treatise. The whole is summed up in a brief EPILOGUE, as it is introduced by this short PROLOGUE.—EDITOR.

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS MEANT BY RELIGION? WHEREIN DOES ITS PERFECTION CONSIST?[1]

In order to understand the meaning of religion, we must know the etymology of the word. St. Augustine in his book *de vera religione* considers it to be derived from *re-ligare* (to re-bind). One thing is bound to another, when it is so joined to it, that it cannot separate from it, and unite itself to anything else. The word *re-binding*, however, implies that one thing, though united to another, has begun, in some degree, to disconnect itself from that other. Now, every creature existed, originally, rather in God than in itself. By creation, however, it came forth from God, and, in a certain measure, it began, in its essence, to have an existence apart from Him. Hence, every rational creature ought to be reunited to God, to whom it was united before it existed apart from Him, even as, "unto the place whence the rivers come, they return to flow again" (*Ecclesiast. i.*). Therefore, St. Augustine says, (*de vera religione*), "Religion reunites us to the one Almighty God." We find the same idea expressed in the commentary of the Gloss, on the words, "for of Him, and by Him" (*Rom. xi.* 36).

The first bond whereby man is united to God, is that of Faith. For, "he that cometh to God must believe" (*Hebr. xi.* 6). *Latria*, which is the worship of God as

[1] St. Thomas treats this question at greater length in *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office*.—Editor.

the Beginning of all things, is the duty of man in this life. Hence, religion, primarily and chiefly, signifies *latria*, which renders worship to God by the expression of the true Faith. St. Augustine makes the same observation in his 10th book *de Civitate Dei*, where he says, "Religion signifies not worship of any kind, but the worship of God." Cicero in his ancient *Rhetoric* gives almost the same definition of religion. He says that, "Religion is that which presents certain homage and ceremonies to a higher nature, which men call the Divine Nature." Hence, all that belongs to the true Faith, and the homage of *latria* which we owe to God, are the primary and chief elements of religion. But, religion is affected, in a secondary manner, by everything by which we manifest our service to God. For, as St. Augustine says in his *Enchiridion*, "God is worshipped not only by faith, but, likewise, by hope and charity. Hence, all offices of charity may be called works of religion." In this sense St. James says (i. 27), "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the orphans and the widow in their tribulation," etc.

Religion, then, bears a twofold meaning. Its first signification is *that* re-binding, which the word implies, whereby a man unites himself to God, by faith and fitting worship. Every Christian, at his Baptism, when he renounces Satan and all his pomps, is made partaker of the true religion. The second meaning of religion is, the obligation whereby a man binds himself to serve God in a peculiar manner, by specified works of charity, and by renunciation of the world. It is in this sense that we intend to use the word religion at present. By charity, befitting homage is rendered to God. This homage may be paid to Him by the exercise of either

the active, or the contemplative, life. Homage is paid to Him by the various duties of the active life, whereby works of charity are performed towards our neighbour. Therefore, some religious orders, such as the monastic and eremetical, are instituted for the worship of God by contemplation. Others have been established to serve God, in His members, by action. Such are the Orders wherein the brethren devote themselves to assisting the sick, redeeming captives, and to similar works of mercy. There is no work of mercy, for the performance of which, a religious order may not be instituted; even though one be not as yet established for that specific purpose.

As by Baptism man is re-united to God by the religion of faith, and dies to sin; so, by the vows of the religious life, he dies, not only to sin, but also to the world, in order to live solely for God in that work in which he has dedicated himself to the Divine service. As the life of the soul is destroyed by sin; so, likewise, the service of Christ is hindered by worldly occupations. For, as St. Paul says (2 *Tim. ii.* 4), "No man being a soldier to God, entangleth himself with secular businesses." It is on this account, that, by the vows of religion, sacrifice is made of all those things, in which the heart of man is wont to be especially absorbed, and which are, consequently, his chief obstacles in the service of God.

That which, first and chiefly, engrosses man is marriage. Hence, St. Paul writes (1 *Cor. vii.* 23), "I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided."

The second thing that fills man's heart, is the possession of earthly riches. "The care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless" (*Matt. xiii.* 22). Hence the Gloss, commenting on the words of St. Luke (*viii.*), "But that which fell among thorns," etc., says, "Riches, although men seem to take pleasure in them, become as thorns to their possessors. They pierce the hearts of such as covetously desire, and avariciously hoard them."

The third thing on which man is inclined to centre his heart, is his own will. He who is his own master, has the care of directing his life. Therefore, we are counselled to commit the disposal of ourselves to Divine Providence, "casting all your care upon Him, for He hath care of you" (1 *Peter v.* 7). "Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence" (*Prov. iii.* 5).

Hence, perfect religion is consecrated to God by a three-fold vow. By the vow of chastity whereby marriage is renounced. By the vow of poverty, whereby riches are sacrificed. And by the vow of obedience, whereby self-will is immolated. By these three vows man offers to God the sacrifice of all that he possesses. By the vow of chastity, he offers his body, according to the words of St. Paul, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" (*Rom. xii.* 1). By the vow of poverty, he makes an offering to God of all his external possessions, as did St. Paul, who says, "that the oblation of my service may be acceptable in Jerusalem to the Saints" (*Rom. xv.* 31). By the vow of obedience, he offers to God that sacrifice of the spirit of which David says, "the sacrifice of God is an afflicted spirit," etc. (*Ps. l.* 19).

But these three vows are, in the sight of God, not a sacrifice only, but also a holocaust. This, in the Old Law, was the most acceptable form of sacrifice. St. Gregory says (8 *Homil. II. part. on Ezech.*), "When a man vows to God one part only of his possessions, he offers a sacrifice. When, however, he offers all that he has, all that he loves, and his entire life to the Almighty, he presents to Him a holocaust." Hence, religion, understood in its secondary sense, in so far as it presents a sacrifice to God, imitates religion taken in its primary sense. There are some who renounce a part of the things which are sacrificed by the religious vows; but this partial renunciation is not perfect religion. The observances customary in religious orders, are intended to be helps, either to the avoidance of what has been renounced by the vows, or to the accomplishment of the promises which religious make to God.

Hence, we see that in a certain sense (*secundum quid*) one religious Order may be judged more perfect than another.[1] The complete perfection of anything consists in its prosecution of the end to which it is ordained. The perfection of a religious Order depends, chiefly, upon two things. First, it depends upon the purpose for which the Order was instituted. That Order is the most perfect which is destined to the noblest work. Thus a comparison may be made between the active and contemplative Orders, according to the comparative utility and dignity of the active and contemplative life. Secondly, a religious Order is more or less perfect, in proportion as it fulfils the end whereto it was insti-

[1] *i.e.*, with regard to the object of its foundation, and the facilities which it offers for the attainment of that object, as the author goes on to explain.—EDITOR.

tuted. It is not enough for an order to be established for a specific purpose, unless its customs and observances be adapted to the attainment of that purpose. If two Orders be founded for the sake of contemplation, that one in which contemplation is chiefly facilitated, must be considered the more perfect of the two. But, because, in the words of St. Augustine, "None can begin a new life, unless he repent of his old life," any religious Order, in which a man begins to lead a new life, must be a state of penance, whereby he may be purged of his old life.

For this reason, a third comparison may be made between religious Orders. That one being reputed the most perfect, wherein the most austerities and penitential exercises, such as fasts and poverty, are practised. But, the first points which we have mentioned are the most essential to religious life. A conclusion as to the perfection of an Order, must, therefore, be based upon the perfection with which these points are observed. For perfection of religious life depends more upon interior justice, than upon external abstinence.

We see, then, what is the nature of religion, or the religious life, and in what religious perfection consists. Our next task will be to repeat the arguments adduced by the adversaries of Religion, and then to refute them.[1]

We shall proceed, therefore, in the following order. We shall enquire:

1. Whether it be lawful for a religious to teach.

[1] According to the well-known method of St. Thomas, in this and the following articles, or chapters, he first states the objections of William of St. Amour, and then replies to them.—EDITOR.

2. Whether a religious may lawfully belong to a college of secular teachers.

3. Whether a religious, not charged with the care of souls, may lawfully preach and hear Confessions.

4. Whether a religious be bound to manual labour.

5. Whether a religious may lawfully renounce all that he possesses, retaining no property, either private or common.

6. Whether a religious, especially one belonging to a Mendicant Order, may, lawfully, live on alms.

CHAPTER II

IS IT LAWFUL FOR A RELIGIOUS TO TEACH?

CONSTANT efforts have been made to hinder religious from becoming learned, and, thereby, to ensure their inability to teach. The words of Our Lord, "But be not you called Rabbi" (*Matt. xxiii.* 8), have been quoted in defence of these measures. It has been maintained, that, as these words are a counsel to be observed by the perfect, Religious, as professors of perfection, ought in deference to them, to abstain from teaching. St. Jerome, likewise, has been brought forward as an advocate against the propriety of teaching being undertaken by religious. This saint, in his epistle to Riparius and Desiderius against Vigilantius (and the words are quoted in *xvi. Quaest. I.*),[1] writes thus: "The office of a monk is to mourn, not to teach." Again, in VII. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Hoc nequaquam*, it is said, "The life of monks is one of subjection and discipline, not of teaching, nor ruling, nor of being pastors over others." And as canons regular and other religious are classed as monks (as it is stated in *extra* De postulando, *ex parte*, and *Quod Dei timor*), it follows that no religious may lawfully teach.

It is further argued, that teaching is contrary to the vow of a religious, whereby he renounces the world. "For all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," by which we

[1] For the explanation of this form of citation, see *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office*, page 50, note.—EDITOR.

understand riches, pleasures, and honour. Now, teaching is considered to be an honour; and this theory is thought to be supported by the Gloss upon the words of St. Matthew (iv. 5), "he set Him upon the pinnacle." "In Palestine," says the Gloss, "the roofs were flat, and the Doctors sat thereon, and spoke to the people. The devil seduced many of them with vain glory. For they were puffed up by the honour of teaching." On these words is based the conclusion, that, teaching is contrary to the vow of religious.

Again, it is urged, that, religious are bound as stringently to practise perfect humility, as they are obliged to observe perfect poverty. As their vow of poverty forbids them to possess anything of their own, so the humility, to which they are bound, does not permit them to enjoy any honour. Teaching is, as has been proved, an honour. It is not lawful, consequently, for religious to teach.

A passage from Dionysius (V. Cap. *Eccles. hierarch.*), is quoted as a proof that religious ought not to teach. This writer divides the hierarchy into three classes, viz., those who perform sacred functions; those who share in these functions; and those who, merely, receive the benefit of them. In the same chapter, he divides these functions, likewise, into three classes, viz., that of cleansing, which is the office of deacons; that of enlightening, which is the office of priests; and that of making others perfect, which is the office of bishops. Those that receive the benefit of these sacred functions are also, again, divided into three classes. Of these the first consists of the unclean, who are purified by the deacons; the second is composed of the holy people of God, who are enlightened by priests; and the third class is formed by monks, (who are of a higher rank

than the other classes), and these are perfected by bishops. Hence, the function of monks is to receive holiness, not to impart it to others. And as they who teach must instruct their pupils in sacred science, teaching is not the lawful work of monks.

Again, the scholastic office is more remote from the monastic life, than is the ecclesiastical. But we find (*XVI. quaest. I.*), that, "no one can exercise the priestly functions, and persevere in the due observance of monastic rules." Much less, then, can a monk devote himself to the scholastic office, by teaching or listening.

It is, likewise, supposed to be contrary to the doctrine of the Apostles for religious to teach. For St. Paul says (2 *Cor. x.* 13), "We will not glory beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath measured to us." On these words, the Gloss thus comments: "We use power in-so-far as it has been given to us by the Author of our being: but we do not go beyond the limit, or measure, of our power." The argument, drawn from these words, is, that any religious, overstepping the measure of power assigned by the author of his rule, contravenes the Apostolic doctrine. As no religious order originally included teachers, no monk ought to be promoted to the scholastic office.

Some enemies of religion, however, failing in their attempt to completely prevent religious from teaching, try to prove, that no religious community ought to have many teachers. In support of this theory they quote the words of St. James (iii. 1), "Be ye not many masters, my brethren." These words the Gloss explains to mean, "Do not desire to have many teachers in the Church." Now, one community of

religious is one Church. Hence, there ought not to be many masters in a religious community. St. Jerome writes thus to Rusticus—and the words are quoted in *VII. quaest. I.*—"Bees have one queen. Cranes follow one leader. There is one captain to a vessel. And one lord in a house." Hence, in one community of religious, it is argued, there ought to be only one master.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that there are many religious communities. If each college has more than one teacher, there will be so many religious teachers, that secular masters will, from dearth of pupils, be altogether shut out from the profession. There ought, also, to be a definite number of teachers for every branch of learning; but this great multiplicity of religious professors will cause sacred science to be held in low esteem.

These advocates of half measures, commit, in reality, as great an error, as those who desire to see religious totally excluded from the office of teaching. For, all who go astray and cannot keep on the beaten track of truth, fall, in their efforts to avoid one mistake, into the opposite error. Thus, Sabellius, as St. Augustine remarks, striving to keep clear of the Arian heresy of the division of the Divine Essence, fell into the error of confusing the Divine Persons. Boetius also observes, that Eutyches, although avoiding the Nestorian heresy of dividing the Person of Christ, fell into the error of teaching that in Him there is unity of nature. The same observation applies to Pelagius, to Manichaeus and to other heretics. On this account St. Paul speaks, (2 *Tim. iii.* 8), of "men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith." On which text the Gloss enlarges, by saying, that such men "do not stay in the

faith, but walk round about it, never remaining on the mean line."

The passages quoted from the Decretals and the writings of the Fathers against the right of religious to teach, owe their origin to the following fact. There existed, formerly, among certain presumptuous monks, a mistaken idea, that, because they were monks, they had a right to usurp the office of teachers. This assumption of authority, on their part, gave rise to considerable disturbance to the Church. We find this fact stated in *XVI. quaest. I.*, "Certain monks, bearing no commission from their own bishop, come to Constantinople, and cause confusion to arise in the church of that city." This statement is fully corroborated in ecclesiastical history. The Fathers used every effort, both by arguments and decrees, to suppress these presumptuous monks.

But, certain men of our own day, being "unlearned and unstable, wrest" these decrees "as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (2 *Peter iii.* 16). They, thus, fall into an opposite error, to that which the Fathers strove to rectify. For, it is now asserted by the enemies of religion, that no religious has any right to exercise, or to undertake, the function of teaching; and that such an office ought not to be open to religious orders. We will produce proofs that such a conclusion is utterly unfounded. We will, then, proceed to confute the arguments adduced in its support.

First, we quote the authority of St. Jerome, who writes thus to Rusticus (the words are cited in *XVI. quaest. I.*), "Lead such a life in thy monastery, that thou mayest deserve to become a cleric. Learn, for a long time, that which, hereafter, thou mayest teach."

Again, he continues in the following chapter, "If the desire for the priesthood attract thee, learn that which thou canst teach." From these words, it is plain, that monks may accept the office of teaching. The same fact is proved by the example of the Saints, who taught whilst living in religious orders. We read in the History of the Church, that St. Gregory of Nazianzen, a monk, was sent to Constantinople, in order to teach Holy Scripture. St. Damasus, likewise a monk, instructed his scholars, not only in Scripture, but in liberal arts. We have proof of this in the book *De miraculis beatae Virginis.* St. Jerome, also, although a monk, promises, in his prologue to the Bible, to instruct Paulinus, (also a monk), in Holy Scripture, and he exhorts him to its study. St. Augustine, likewise, we are told, after he had founded the monastery in which he lived by the rule drawn up by the Apostles, wrote books, and instructed the unlearned. In fact, some of the greatest Doctors of the Church—such as SS. Gregory, Basil, Chrysostom, and many others—were religious.

Our Lord Himself has set the same example. For, as we read (*Acts i.* 1), "Jesus began to do and to teach." The Gloss thus comments on these words: "Christ, by beginning to do and to teach, shows that a good teacher must do what he teaches." The Gospels contain not only doctrine, but likewise counsels. Therefore, he who not only instructs others in the Evangelical precepts, but likewise himself observes the counsels (as do religious), are the most fit exponents of the Scriptures.

Again, when a man dies, he passes away from the works belonging to the life which he quits. When he begins a new life, those works best beseem him which

belong to the life on which he enters. Dionysius, 2 CAP. *Eccles. hierarch.*, shows, that, before Baptism, whereby man receives the Divine life, he is incapable of any Divine operation; for life must precede work. In like manner a religious, by his vows, dies to the world in order to live to God. Hence, he is excluded from any share in secular business, such as commerce; but he is not forbidden to perform those Divine functions which require for their exercise life in God. Among such offices, is that of giving praise to God, which is only rightly done by those who have knowledge of sacred things. "The dead shall not praise Thee, O Lord. . . . But we that live" (Ps. cxiii. 17).

Another office from which religious are not excluded by their vows is that of teaching. On the contrary, being rendered by contemplation capable of understanding Divine things, they are certainly the most fit to impart them to others. Hence, St. Gregory says (*6 Moral*), "They that contemplate with undistracted mind, drink in that knowledge, which they afterwards, when they are busied in speech, communicate to others." Now, religious are chiefly set apart for contemplation. Thus, then, we see, that religious become, by their vocation, more, rather than less, fit for teaching.

It is ridiculous to assert, that a man is rendered incapable of teaching, because he has adopted a life which gives him more quiet, and greater facility for study and learning. It would be as reasonable to say that a person is debarred from running, because he avoids the obstacles on his course. Now, religious, as we have already seen, renounce, by their vows, all those things that chiefly disquiet the human heart. They, therefore, are the men best adapted for study

and for teaching. "Write wisdom (*i.e.*, *Divine wisdom*, according to the Gloss) upon the tables of thy heart" (*Prov. vii.* 3). "The wisdom of a scribe cometh by his time of leisure; and he that is less in action, shall receive wisdom" (*Eccli. xxxviii.* 25).

St. Jerome teaches, that the poor of Christ have a special claim to the knowledge of the Scripture. "They know," he says, (in *prol. Hebraicarum quaestionum, super Gen*), "that we are poor and lowly, and do not own property nor accept alms. They know, likewise, that none can possess the treasure of Christ, *i.e.*, the knowledge of the Scriptures, together with the riches of the world." But it behoves those to teach, who have knowledge of the Scripture. Hence, religious, who profess poverty, are peculiarly fitted to teach.

We have already pointed out that religious Orders may be founded for the prosecution of any work of charity. Now teaching is numbered amongst the spiritual works of mercy. Therefore a religious Order may be instituted for the purpose of teaching.

Certain religious Orders exist in the Church for the purpose of defending her against her enemies by force of arms, although there is no dearth of secular princes who are her official champions.[1] Surely, warfare with sword and shield, must appear less consonant with a religious life, than is that spiritual combat waged against heresy by sacred writings, and such-like intellectual weapons against heresy. It is of this spiritual armour that St. Paul says, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful through God," etc. (2 *Cor. x.* 4). Why, then, may not Orders

[1] An allusion to the military orders existing in the Church in the middle ages.—EDITOR.

be lawfully founded for the purpose of teaching, and thus, of defending the Church against her enemies, although she has other defenders, who are not religious?

We must remember, once more, that he who is fit for a greater thing in which a lesser is included, ought to be accounted fit for the lesser, included in the greater one. Now a religious, even if he do not belong to an order founded for teaching, may, as we know (*De monachis;* CAP. XVI. QUAEST. I.), be promoted to the office of a prelate. As, therefore, the office of prelate is greater than that of a doctor, (which is exercised by the masters who hold professorships in the schools), and, as a prelate is bound to be versed in sacred learning, it ought not to appear unseemly for a monk, by permission of lawful authority, to undertake the function of teaching.

"Lesser goods may be sacrificed for greater ones," as the Gloss remarks on the words, "go thou, and preach the kingdom of God" (*Luke ix.* 60); but the common welfare must always be preferred to any private advantage. Now, while a monk is observing his rule in his cloister, he is working only for his personal advantage, *i.e.*, for his own salvation. When, however, he is instructing many, his efforts redound to the profit of the whole Church. Hence, it is not unseemly for a religious to live outside his monastery, in order, by permission of lawful authority, to exercise the office of teaching.

Neither is it a valid objection to urge, that monks ought not to act thus at present, while there is no dearth of secular teachers. For, the common welfare ought not to be sought by any means that may offer, but, by the surest means possible. Now, a plurality of

teachers is greatly to the public advantage; for one will be well versed in subjects, of which another is ignorant. Hence, we read in Wisdom vi. 26, "The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the whole world." "O that all the people might prophesy," Moses cried out in his zeal for knowledge (Numb. xi. 29). The Gloss remarks upon his words, that, "a faithful preacher would fain have all men to utter the truth, which he himself does not suffice to declare." And, in another place, the Gloss continues, in the same strain, "He" (*i.e.*, Moses) "wished all men to prophesy; for he was not jealous of the gift bestowed upon him."

It matters little whether teaching be conveyed by the word of a master who is present, or by the writing of one who is absent. To quote St. Paul (2 *Cor. x.* 11), "Such as we are in word by epistles when absent, such also we will be in deed when present." Now, no one who has seen the libraries of books, composed by monks, for the instruction of the Church, doubts that they can teach, by writing, when absent. Therefore, it is lawful for them to teach, by word, when present.

We will now proceed to the easy task of confuting the objections brought against the right of religious to teach.

The first argument, namely, that Our Lord gave a counsel to His disciples not to be masters, is, for several reasons, misleading. First, because the works of supererogation, concerning which the counsels are given, are rewarded by a peculiar recompense. "Whatsoever thou shalt spend, over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee" (*Luke x.* 33). These words are applied, by the Gloss, to works of supererogation. Hence, it cannot be a counsel to abstain from works that are

to be specially rewarded. Now, teachers, like virgins, are promised a peculiar recompense. For we read in Daniel xii. 3, "They that instruct" (*i.e.*, by word and example, as the Gloss explains) "many to justice, (shall shine) as stars for all eternity." Hence, there is no better ground for saying that it is a counsel to refrain from the function of teaching, than there is for maintaining that it is a matter of counsel to abstain from virginity, or from martyrdom.

Again, there cannot be a counsel which is contradicted either by another counsel, or by a precept. But, teaching is a matter both of precept and of counsel. For, Our Lord said: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations" (*Matt. xxviii.* 19). St. Paul also writes: "You, who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness" (*Galat. vi.* 1). Hence, there can be no counsel forbidding us to teach.

Again, Our Lord willed that His Apostles should themselves put His counsels in practice, in order that, by their example, others should be led to their observance. Hence, St. Paul, giving the counsel of virginity, says, (1 *Cor. vii.* 7), "I would that all men should be even as I myself." But, the Apostles, certainly, did not observe the so-called counsel not to teach. For they themselves were sent forth to teach over the whole world. Thus, there can be no counsel against teaching.

It is unreasonable to say that it is a counsel to abstain from those things that embrace the dignity of teaching. Solemnities pertaining to an office are not a cause of personal elation. Otherwise all men would be bound to shun them; since it is the duty of all to avoid pride. External insignia merely demonstrate the exalted character of an office. Hence, as it

is not imperfect for a priest to sit above a deacon, or to wear costly vestments, it can, certainly, be no imperfection to make use of the insignia pertaining to the scholastic office. Our Lord said of the Pharisees, "They love the first places at feasts" (*Matt. xxiii.* 6); but, "He did not," (as the Gloss remarks), "forbid masters to occupy the first seats, he merely reproved the desire to have, or not to have them." It is truly absurd to say, that, though it be not a counsel to refrain from teaching, it is a counsel to refuse the name of master. There cannot be a counsel, or a precept, regarding what is not in ourselves but in another. To teach or not to teach is our own concern, and we have shown that it is not a matter of counsel. But the fact that we are called master or doctor, is no affair of ours. It regards those who give us these names. Therefore, to refrain from being called master, cannot be a counsel.

Further, as names are used to mean certain things, it is foolish to say that a name is forbidden, while the thing signified by it, is allowed. Likewise, the observance of the Counsels was, primarily, the duty of the Apostles. It is only through their instrumentality that they are observed by any other persons. Now, the name of Master cannot be forbidden by any counsel, since the Apostles called themselves both masters and teachers. "I am appointed a preacher and an apostle (I say the truth, I lie not) a doctor of the Gentiles in faith and truth" (1 *Tim. ii.* 7). "In which I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (2 *Tim. i.* 11).

It remains to be considered that Our Lord's words: "Be ye not called Rabbi" are not a counsel but a precept, by which all men are bound. He wished not

to forbid the office of teaching, but the sin of ambition. Neither when He added, "nor masters," did He forbid us to teach, nor yet to bear the name of master. What His words signify, according to the Gloss, is: "do not desire to be called masters." He forbids the desire of place. He does not forbid all such desire, but only such as is inordinate, and therefore unlawful. This has been proved both by a foregoing quotation from the Gloss, and also by Christ's words about the Pharisees, "They love the first places," etc. Nevertheless, these words, may (says the Gloss) bear another interpretation. If Our Lord forbids us to be called by the name of master and teacher, He equally prohibits our bearing the name of Father; for we have one Father who is in Heaven and one Master Christ. "For God" (as the Gloss says) "is by nature both our Father and our Master." A man may be called father, to signify his tenderness; and master, to denote the authority which he exercises. That which Our Lord forbids is, that to any man should be attributed either right over physical, or spiritual life, or plenitude of wisdom. Hence, the commentary of the Gloss on this prohibition of Christ, is as follows: "Do not you be called masters, as assuming to yourselves that which is due to God. Do not you call others Rabbi, as paying to man Divine homage." And in another place we find the following commentary on the same passage: "A man may be called father, as a mark of respect to his age; but not to denote that he is the author of life." In the same way, a man may be addressed as master, meaning that he is united to the true master, and that we reverence Him whose commission he holds. But, if Our Lord had absolutely forbidden, either by counsel or precept, the name of

father or master to be given to men, the Fathers of the Church would, certainly, not have allowed monastic superiors to be called Abbots, a word equivalent to father. If the name father were forbidden, how could the Vicar of Christ, who ought to set an example of perfection, be called Pope or father? Again, both St. Augustine and St. Jerome frequently addressed bishops as popes, or fathers. Hence it is the height of folly to pretend, that the words, "be ye not called Rabbi," are to be understood as a counsel.

But, even granted that these words were intended by Our Lord as a counsel, it does not follow that all such as are perfect would be bound to observe it. For, those who make profession of the state of perfection, are not under an obligation to obey all the counsels, but only such as they, by their vows, are bound to observe. Were it otherwise, the Apostles, who were in the state of perfection, would have been bound to perform the work of supererogation, which St. Paul practised in taking no stipend from the churches in which he preached; and they would have sinned had they acted otherwise (1 *Cor. ix.*). Were all religious equally bound to observe every counsel, and to perform every work of supererogation, great confusion would ensue, and the distinctions which now differentiate the various Orders would be abolished. Those who are in a state of perfection are not bound to observe all the Counsels, but only those to which their vows oblige them.

The argument, that the office of a religious is not to teach, but to mourn, carries no weight. St. Jerome meant, by the words quoted, that the chief duty of a monk, as a monk, is to do penance, not to teach. He, hereby, shows that a monk is not, by virtue of his pro-

fession, bound to teach; and he rebukes the presumption of those religious who claimed the function of teaching as their special prerogative. He writes in the same sense in his epistle to Vigilantius. But, it does not, by any means, follow that, although a monk has not the office of teaching, it may not at some future time be imposed upon him. It is not the duty of a subdeacon to read the Gospel, but that does not prove that this office will never fall to his share, as Gratian points out (*XVI. quaest. I. "Superiori"*). St. Jerome wished to emphasise the distinction between the person of a monk and that of a cleric, and to show, that certain duties were peculiar to the office of each. One function belongs to a monk, as a monk; another to an ecclesiastic, as an ecclesiastic. The duty peculiar to a monk, by reason of his state of life, is to mourn for his own sins, and those of others. The task especially allotted to an ecclesiastic is that of preaching to, and instructing, the people. This distinction appears still more clearly in another chapter of Gratian, in which he treats of the teaching conveyed by preaching, which is the special duty of prelates, not of scholastic teaching in which they are not specially well practised. Hence, in raising this objection against the right of religious to teach, our adversaries are begging the question.

But, even supposing that it be not lawful for a monk to teach, that does not prove that it is not right for Canons regular to teach; since these are counted as ecclesiastics. St. Augustine, in his sermon *de communi vita clericorum* (quoted XII. QUAEST. I. *Nemo*), says, speaking of Canons regular: "He who possesses, or desires to possess, private property, and to live on his own means, virtually renounces his life with me, and is

not a cleric." This passage shows, that they who lived under the rule of this Saint, in the practice of poverty, were recognised as clerics. Although St. Augustine withdrew the assertion that no one was a cleric who retained private property, he never contradicted his words, that those who lived under him without possessing anything of their own, were clerics (*see* cap. *Certe ego sum.* quaest. eadem).

When canons regular and monks are said to be equally counted as religious, it is to be understood, that they are equal in observance of the points common to all religious Orders, *i.e.*, the renunciation of private property, abstention from commerce or from legal business, and the like. Unless this be made clear, it might be thought, that canons regular were bound to certain observances, *e.g.* the disuse of wearing linen apparel, to which monks are bound. Even if it be not lawful for monks to teach, this function is certainly permissible to religious belonging to Orders instituted for the purpose; just as it is lawful for the Knights Templar to bear arms, although the use of armour is forbidden to monks.

The objection, that the exercise of the teaching office is contrary to the religious vows, is, on several accounts, ill-founded. Religious do not renounce the world in the sense that they can make no use of secular things. They renounce a worldly life, *i.e.* they are not allowed, by their vows, to be employed in secular affairs. Even among men living in the world, there are some who are not of the world, *i.e.* who are disengaged from temporal interests. But religious do not act contrary to their vows, by making use of the riches or even, at times, of the pleasures, of the world. Otherwise occasional feasting would for them

be mortal sin, which is, of course, out of the question. If it be not against the religious vows to make use of secular riches, or pleasure, why should it be contrary to these vows, to make use of worldly honour?

Not only religious, but all men are, in one sense, bound to renounce the world, as we learn from the words of St. John already quoted (1 Ep. cap. ii. 15). "If any man love the world the charity of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life." The Gloss says, that, "lovers of the world have nothing except these three things, viz. the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; from which sources spring every vice." Hence, we see, that it is not riches or pleasure simply, which are said to belong to the world, but the inordinate desire for them; and that not honour, but ambition, is forbidden, not to religious alone, but to all mankind. "The pride of life," says the Gloss, "signifies worldly ambition." But, even if honour simply, be understood as belonging to the world, this would not be true of every kind of honour, but only of such as consists of worldly things. The honour of the priesthood cannot be said to belong to the world. Neither can the honour given to a teacher, when the teaching which is honoured, concerns spiritual things. Thus, if religious do not, by their vows, renounce the priesthood, they need not renounce the office of teaching. Again, it is untrue to say that the act of teaching is an honour. It is the teacher's office, which is honourable. And, even if religious renounce all honours, they cannot renounce all honourable functions; otherwise they would renounce all those works of mercy which are most deserving of honour. "Honour," to

quote Aristotle, "is the reward of virtue" (*I. Ethic*). That the devil deceives some men, and fills them with pride on account of their office as teachers, is no more reason for refusing the work of teaching, than it is for declining to do any virtuous actions. For, as St. Augustine says, "Pride insinuates itself into good works, to make them worthless."

The assertion, that religious profess perfect humility, is absolutely untrue. They make no vow of humility. Their vow is of obedience. Neither humility, nor any other virtue, is a matter of vow. Acts of virtue, being a matter of precept, are a necessity. Vows are only concerned with that which is voluntary. Again, no one can make a vow of perfect humility, or of perfect charity. For perfection is a gift of God; it does not depend upon our will.

Granted, however, that religious were bound to perfect humility, that would not hinder their receiving certain honours. The possession of property is certainly contrary to perfect poverty, but the acceptance of honours is not contrary to humility. For, pride consists, not in possessing honours, but in being unduly elated by them. Hence, St. Bernard says (in *libro de consideratione*), "Even in the tiara of the Sovereign-Pontiff there is no jewel brighter than humility! He that is in a more exalted position than others, becomes, by humility, superior to himself." And in the book of Ecclesiasticus iii. 20, we read: "the greater thou art, the more humble thyself in all things." Who would dare to say that St. Gregory became less humble, by being promoted to the highest ecclesiastical honour? Moreover, as we have said, the function of teaching is not an honour. Therefore, objections brought against it, on that ground, are worthless.

Another argument brought against the right of religious to teach is, that Dionysius distinguishes monks as apart from deacons, priests, and bishops. We know from ecclesiastical history, that the monks of the primitive Church, until the time of Eusebius, Zozimus, and Siricius, were not clerics (Cf. XVI. Quaest. I. *Superiori*). Therefore, as it is of these monks, that Dionysius speaks, we cannot, from his words, come to any conclusion about the monks who were bishops, priests, or deacons. Any difficulty on the point, arises from a misunderstanding of the words of Dionysius. This author calls the Sacraments of the Church sacred actions. Baptism he terms cleansing and illumination. Confirmation and the Blessed Eucharist he names perfecting (*IV. Cap. Eccl. hierarch.*). Now, it is not lawful for any, save bishops, priests, or deacons, to perform these sacred functions. Teaching in the schools, however, is not one of the holy rites, or sacred actions, whereof he speaks; otherwise it could be undertaken by none save by a priest, or a deacon. Again, ordained monks can consecrate the Body of Our Lord, a power pertaining to none but priests. Why, then, should they not exercise the function of teaching, for which no Orders are required?

It is further urged, that, as no monk can be employed in ecclesiastical duties, and yet keep his monastic rule aright, much less can he combine the work of teaching with regular observance. Our answer is, that, as we have already shown, this objection does not hold good with regard to the essentials of religious life. For these can be practised by those who hold ecclesiastical offices. As for such religious observances as silence, vigils, and the like, it is shown in another chapter, that, "he who is obliged to serve daily in the ministry of the

Church, practises the strictness of his monastic life." But, it is not unseemly if anyone neglect regular observance, for the sake of performing an action, such as teaching, which is for the common good. Thus, religious who are called to the office of prelates, sometimes while they are still in their monastery, accept a dispensation for such reason. There are, also, religious, living in their cloister in strict observance, who exercise the function of teaching, because it is enjoined by their rule.

The seventh objection to the right of a religious to teach is, that by so doing, he oversteps his measure, or, as the Gloss says, goes further than is permitted to him. Now, when we say that a thing is permitted, we mean that it is not forbidden by any law. Hence, if a religious do something not prohibited by his rule, even though the thing be not mentioned in the Rule, he does not overstep his measure. Otherwise, religious who live under a mitigated rule, would have no right to undertake the customs and usages of a more perfect life. Such a prohibition would be opposed to the sentiments of St. Paul, (*Philipp. iii.*), who says, that, forgetting the things that were behind, he stretched forth himself to those that were before. We must, further, remember that some religious are, by the rule of their Order, destined for teaching. To them, of course, the foregoing objection cannot apply.

The suggestion, that in one community of religious there ought not to be two teachers, is manifestly unfair. Religious, as we have shown, are not less humble than are seculars; and their position in the office of teaching, ought not to be worse than that of seculars. But, if the suggestion, to which we have alluded, were carried out in practice, religious would

have far less chance of success in the profession of teaching, than would be the case with seculars. For a number of religious would have no more opportunity of promotion to a professorship, than any individual layman would have who studied alone. Hence, the progress of religious would be seriously impeded. We may compare their position to that of wrestlers, whose spirit in their match would be damped, if the prize for which they strove, were withdrawn. For, as Aristotle says (*III. Ethics*), "The bravest in the fight, are those who despise cowardice, and honour courage." In like manner, it is a hindrance to a student, if the chance of a professorship, the prize for which he is working, be denied him. It would be regarded as a penalty for some offence, if a man, who, by his learning, had gained a right to some scholastic post, were not allowed to occupy it; and in the same way, a religious would be punished for being a religious, were obstacles placed in the way of his gaining a professorship. Nothing could be more unjust, than, thus, to punish a man for leading a meritorious life.

The authority of St. James, "be ye not many masters, my brethren," brought forward in support of this suggestion, applies as much to laymen as to religious. For, in the New Testament, all Christians are called brethren; and the Church is called a society of Christians. Neither is a multitude of religious teachers more stringently forbidden, (by the authority cited), than is a multiplicity of secular teachers. For, as St. Augustine says, "by many teachers is meant teachers teaching contrary doctrines. Many who teach alike are but as one teacher." Hence, St. James' prohibition is directed against divergence of doctrine, not against plurality of masters. His words may also

be understood in their literal sense, as meaning, that discrimination must be exercised in the choice of teachers; that only such men must be chosen for this office as are discreet and well versed in the Scriptures. But, as the Gloss remarks, there are not many such to be found. In another passage, the Gloss says, that, "they who are not learned in the word of faith, should not be allowed to teach; lest true preachers be hindered in their work." Or, again, the words of St. James, which have been quoted, may apply to masters, in the sense of prelates of the Church. For it is forbidden for one bishop to govern several churches; or for several bishops to rule over one church. Hence, the Gloss says, "Do not desire to be masters, *i.e.* prelates (who alone are ecclesiastical masters), in many churches; or to have many masters in one church." For, he that teaches in a community is not a master of a church; although the community to which he belongs may be called a church.

We can answer the second argument of our adversaries, by saying, that, although there be several masters in one community they do not rule, as a captain guides a ship, or a queen-bee reigns in a hive. Each master presides over his own school. Hence, the words of St. Jerome ("among bees there is one queen") cannot be understood in the sense in which our opponents use them. They only mean, that there should not be many masters in the same school.

To the third argument brought against a multiplicity of religious teachers, we reply, that the fact that there may be several religious houses, each containing many masters, does not debar laymen from the profession of teaching. There are not always in a community of religious, enough men capable of teaching. Again, the

fact that in any diocese there may be a sufficiency of teachers, does not exclude seculars from this function. Religious and laymen ought to be judged on the same lines; and the most capable masters, be they secular or religious, ought to be selected without distinction of person. We need not fear that the Holy Scriptures will fall into contempt, on account of a multiplicity of teachers to expound them. There is more danger of this being the case, when the professors of Scripture are few in number. Hence, there is no reason why the number of teachers should be limited; or why, through fear of their being too many, men capable of teaching should be excluded from that office.

CHAPTER III

CAN A RELIGIOUS LAWFULLY BELONG TO A COLLEGE OF SECULAR TEACHERS[1]

THOSE who are hostile to religious, make a malicious effort to prove that they ought not, in anything pertaining to study, to have dealings with seculars. Their object in thus acting, is to place obstacles in the path of such religious as are employed in teaching, if they cannot entirely hinder them in the exercise of that function. They adduce several authorities in support of their principles.

First they quote the following words of XVII. CAP. VII. *In nova actione:* "Those engaged in the same work, ought not to differ in profession. This was forbidden by the law of Moses, 'Thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together' (Deut. xxii.), which means 'thou shalt not associate in one office men of different professions.'" The reason given is, "they whose aims and desires are dissimilar, cannot unite nor coalesce." Since, then, laymen and religious differ in profession, they ought not to be joined in the teaching office. Again, St. Augustine says, that every man ought to adhere to such a manner of life as befits him. Now, it does not appear seemly, that the same

[1] William of St. Amour maintained that it was unlawful for religious to teach at the Universities. St. Thomas, in this article replies to the arguments with which he upheld this contention.—EDITOR.

man should belong, at one and the same time, to a secular and to a religious establishment. For, the members of one institute cannot imitate the usages of the other. Hence, a religious, belonging to his own community, should not be a member of a secular college.

Again, a legal statute has ruled, that, without a dispensation, the same man shall not belong to two lay associations. Much less, then, ought a religious, belonging to his own community, to be a member of a secular establishment. Again, all who belong to any society are bound to obey its rules. Now, religious cannot conform to regulations drawn up for lay professors and scholars; nor can they promise to abide by those ordinances which laymen bind themselves to observe; nor to take the oaths which seculars take. For, religious are not their own masters, but live under authority. Hence they cannot belong to secular societies.

But, the malicious enemies of religious, in their desire to exclude them from any intercourse with seculars, strive, in default of legitimate arguments, to accomplish their purpose by calumny. They maintain that religious are a source of offence and scandal to the world; and they exhort their fellows to avoid all communion with them. They quote the words of St. Paul (*Rom. xvi.* 17), "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who cause dissensions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and to avoid them." Religious are accused of living in idleness. Therefore, according to the words of St. Paul (2 *Thess. iii.* 6) they ought to be shunned by good men. For, the Apostle says: "We charge you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that

you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly, and not according to the tradition which they have received of us." St. Paul goes on to speak of the manual labour practised by the Apostles. He then continues, "For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us." He concludes his exhortation by the following command: "If any man obey not our word," (*i.e.* our injunction to manual labour), "by this epistle, note that man; and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed."

Religious are, further, denounced by their enemies as being the source of all the evils which are to flood the world in the latter days. Hence, they must be shunned by all men. For, St. Paul, writing to Timothy, (*2nd Ep. iii.*), gives a most emphatic order on this head. "Know," he says, "that in the last days shall come on dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, etc., . . . having an appearance indeed of goodness (or of religion, as the Gloss says), but denying the power thereof. Now these avoid." But, as, in the same chapter, St. Paul says, "Evil men and seducers shall grow worse and worse: erring and driving into error," so, these defamers of religious, not satisfied with calumny, try to make void the authority of the Apostle, saying, that, not even at his bidding, are they bound to admit religious to their society. For, according to civil law, there is no obligation which can compel them to permit religious to associate with them; since society is established on the basis of free will. Hence, the Apostolic authority is limited to ecclesiastical affairs. St. Paul himself said, (2 *Cor. x.* 13), "We will not glory beyond our measure: but according to the measure of the rule, which God has measured to us."

Now, ecclesiastical affairs include the collation of benefices, the administration of the Sacraments, and the like, but not association in studies. Hence, secular students are not, by Apostolic authority, bound to admit religious to their society.

Again, power is committed to the ministers of the church, not "unto destruction, but unto edification" (2 *Cor. xiii.* 10). Hence, as the enemies of religious consider that they have proofs that union between religious and seculars would be "unto destruction," they hold, that the authority of the Apostles cannot compel them to form such an union.

This opinion, however, is censurable, mistaken, and ill-founded. It deserves censure inasmuch as it detracts from that unity in the Church, which, as St. Paul says (*Rom. xii.* 5), is based on the fact, that, "We being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." The Gloss interprets these words as meaning, that, "we are members one of another, since we are of service to each other, and are in need of the assistance of one another." This is true of all men alike; neither the greater, nor the lesser amongst us, being excluded. Hence, whosoever hinders one man from serving another, as far as he be able, impairs the unity of the Church. Now, the work of teaching is one adapted to religious. St. Paul mentions this, saying, "he that teacheth in doctrine." Thereby the apostle means, says the Gloss, "he that has the gift of teaching, should, by his instruction, prove himself a member of another." Hence, it is a violation of ecclesiastical unity, to hinder religious, either from teaching others, or from learning from them. It is, likewise, an infraction of charity. For, as Aristotle says (*Ethics viii. and x.*), "friendship is

based on intercourse, and by it is fostered." These words are borne out by the saying of Solomon, "A man amiable in society, shall be more friendly than a brother" (*Prov. xviii.* 24). Anyone, therefore, who hinders intercourse, in scholastic matters, between laymen and religious, weakens charity, and sows the seed of quarrels and dissensions.

Again, obstacles thrown in the way of such intercourse, will tend to impede the progress made by students. In all social matters, the companionship of others is of great advantage. "A brother that is helped by his brother, is like a strong city," says Solomon (*Prov. xviii.* 19). "It is better, therefore, that two should be together than one: for they have the advantage of their society" (*Ecclesiast. iv.* 9). But it is, especially, in study, that society is of use; for among many students some will know or understand that, of which others are ignorant. Hence Aristotle (*I. lib. Caeli et Mundi*) says, "that the ancient philosophers did, at divers meetings, investigate the truth concerning the heavenly bodies." The exclusion then of any class of men from the society of other students, is a manifest injury to the studies of all. This applies, especially, to the exclusion of religious, who are peculiarly well adapted to make progress in learning; since, by their state of life, they are not distracted by worldly anxieties. "He that is less in action, shall receive wisdom" (*Ecclesiast. xxxviii.* 25).

By excluding religious from studying in common with laymen, an injury is committed against the community of faith, which is called Catholic because it ought to be one. Those who do not associate with each other by agreeing on religious matters, may easily end by teaching different, and even contradictory,

doctrines. St. Paul says of himself (*Gal. ii.* 1), "Then, after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up according to revelation, and communicated with them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but apart to them who seemed to be something: lest perhaps I should run, or had run, in vain." We learn from the decretals (*distinct. XV. cap.* CANONES), that Councils began to be convoked in the time of Constantine. Before that period, there was, on account of frequent and violent persecutions, very little facility for the instruction of the faithful; and, as bishops had no opportunity for meeting to debate together, the Christian religion was torn by many heresies. This fact proves, that there is great danger of schism, in matters of doctrine, when the preachers of the faith are not able to assemble for purposes of discussion. Hence, any attempt to exclude religious from intercourse with other teachers and students, is highly to be condemned.

The reason given for such an exclusion, is, likewise, ill-founded, being opposed to Apostolic doctrine which cannot err. St. Peter (1 *Ep.* iv. 10), writes in these terms: "As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another; as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The Gloss thus comments on this passage: "The Apostle signifies by the word 'grace,' any gift of the Holy Spirit which may be used for the assistance of others, in things either temporal or spiritual. He exemplifies his meaning by the words which follow. "If any man speak, let him speak as the words of God." The Gloss adds, "If any man know how to speak, let him attribute his knowledge not to himself, but to God." Let him stand in fear,

lest he teach aught contrary to the will of God, the authority of Scripture, or the good of his brethren; or, lest he be silent, when he ought to speak." Hence, the assertion that Religious and laymen ought not, mutually, to communicate their gift of knowledge, is, patently, opposed to the teaching of the Apostles.

Again, we read in Ecclesiast. xxxiii. 18, "See that I have not laboured for myself only, but for all that seek discipline." These words, as the Gloss observes, apply to the teachers of the Church, who, by their writings and instruction, profit not themselves alone, but others also. The wise man, in the text that we have quoted, says, that he has laboured for all men, without exception. Therefore, both religious and secular teachers, ought, by their teaching, to labour for the benefit of all their brethren, whether laymen or religious.

As the body is composed of several members, so in the Church there exist divers offices. This comparison, we find in the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (xii.). Now, as in the physical body there are eyes, so in the mystical body of the Church there are teachers. Hence the Gloss understands the text in the Gospel of St. Matthew (xviii. 9), "If thine eye scandalise thee" etc., to refer to ecclesiastical doctors and counsellors. Physical eyesight is useful to the whole body alike; and one limb subserves another in its functions. For, as St. Paul says (1 Cor. xii. 21), "the eye cannot say to the hand: I need not thy help; nor again the head to the feet: I have no need of you." Therefore, everyone who undertakes the office of teaching, must perform it for the benefit of all men, of whatsoever condition they may be. Thus, religious must assist laymen; and laymen must help religious.

Again, any person who is competent to perform some special function, has a right to be admitted to the society of those who are selected for the exercise of that function. For, an association means the union of men, gathered together for the accomplishment of some specific work. Thus, all soldiers have a right to associate with one another in the same army; for an army is nothing but a society of men, banded together for the purpose of fighting. Hence religious of a military order, do not exclude from their society secular soldiers, and *vice versâ*. Now, an association of study is a society, established with the object of teaching and of learning; and as not only laymen, but also religious, have a right to teach and to learn, there can be no doubt that, both these classes may lawfully unite in one society.

The objection made to intercourse between seculars and religious, on matters bearing on study and teaching, are altogether frivolous. They are based on wholly untenable grounds; and they only serve to show the ignorance of their authors. For, as we have already said, a society means a union of men, assembled together for one and the same purpose. Hence, as everything ought to be judged with regard to the end for which it is ordained, the different societies which exist, ought to be distinguished and judged, according to the purpose for which they are formed. Aristotle, (*VIII. Ethics*), classifies different *communications*. By this term he means associations, formed for divers objects, wherein the members hold communication one with the other. The Philosopher distinguishes friendships according to these communications. He refers to the friendship of those brought up together, or that based on commercial transactions, or the friendship of

men engaged in the same business. Hence arises the distinction between public and private societies. A public society is that wherein men assemble for purposes connected with the common weal. Thus, fellow citizens, or compatriots, form a public society, and become one city, or one kingdom. A private society is one established by a few persons, for some private end. Thus, two or three enter into partnership in a mercantile negotiation. Now, each of these classes of society may be either temporary or perpetual. Sometimes a number of men, or only two or three individuals, band together in a perpetual society. This is the case with those, who, when they become citizens of some city, form an association, choosing that city for their dwelling-place for ever. They, thus, establish a political society. Again, there may be a perpetual private society, formed between husband and wife, or master and slave, based upon the durable nature of the tie binding together the members of such a society. This is called an economical society. But, when men associate in order to engage in some temporary business, as, for example, to hold a fair, they form a temporary and public society. Or, when two friends are engaged in the management of the same inn, the society which they establish is private, and at at the same time temporary.

Now, these various classes of association, must be judged by different standards. To apply the name of association or society, indiscriminately, to all, is to prove one's own ignorance. For this reason, we shall have no difficulty in answering the objections brought against the association of seculars and religious.

We are told, first of all, that " men of different professions ought not to be associated in the same office."

These words are quoted, "thou shalt not join together men of different professions." This objection is perfectly true if it be understood to mean, that men of different professions, should not be associated in matters upon which they differ. Hence, laymen and clerics should not be associated in ecclesiastical matters. Therefore the following words are found before the words just quoted: "A bishop ought not to have a lay vicar; and the clergy ought not to be judged in lay courts of justice." For the same reason, religious cannot associate with laymen in commercial and mercantile transactions, in which religious are forbidden to take part. "No man being a soldier of God entangleth himself with secular businesses" (2 *Tim. ii.* 4). But, as we have seen, the exercise of teaching and of learning concerns both seculars and religious. Hence, there is no reason against religious being associated with laymen in scholastic affairs. For, men of different conditions, who agree in unity of faith, form the body of the Church. "There is neither Jew nor Greek: there is neither bond nor free: there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus" (*Galat. iii.* 28). It is objected, that, although, in an association of laymen and religious, there are some points common to both classes, there are, likewise, some on which they differ. Thus, there may be a purely secular society, formed of members whose interests are limited to secular affairs. Or, there may be an exclusively religious institute, of which the system is directed towards the formation of the religious life. There is, however, one point which is common both to laymen and to religious. For, religious and seculars have this in common, viz., that they belong to the Society of the one Church

of Christ, by that agreement in one faith, whereby the unity of the Church is made perfect. Hence, as teaching and learning are functions pertaining alike to seculars and religious, an association of study ought not to be known as, exclusively, either a lay or a religious college; but, rather, as a college including both seculars and religious.

The objection that no one can belong to two associations, is, for three reasons, untenable. First, because a part cannot be numerically accounted as opposed to the whole. A private society is part of a public society, as a house is part of a city. The fact that a man forms part of a family causes him to form part of a city, which is composed of many families. Nevertheless, he does not, on this account, belong to two distinct associations. Now, as an association of studies is a public association, a man who forms part of a private society, (be it secular or religious), wherein a few students meet together for the purposes of study, belongs, on this very account, to a general scholastic association. But, he does not, for this reason, belong to two associations. Again, there is no law to prohibit a man from belonging to some public, perpetual association, and, at the same time, from forming part of a public or private, temporary society. Thus, a man who belongs to some civic society, may, likewise, form part of a military association; and the member of a family, may be associated with others in an inn. Now an institute of studies is a temporary, not a perpetual, association. For men attend it, not as a permanent residence; but they go and come, at their own convenience. Hence, there is no reason why a man belonging to a perpetual society, such as a

religious order, should not also attend a scholastic establishment. The third reason which stultifies the objection to the admission of religious to secular colleges is, that this objection applies the particular to the general. The assertion, that a man cannot belong to two associations, was, originally, formulated about ecclesiastical societies. Thus, a man cannot be a canon in two churches, without a dispensation or a legitimate reason. We read (*XXI. quaest. I.*), "From this date, no cleric shall be attached to two churches." But, this rule does not apply to other associations. For, the same man can be a citizen of two cities. Therefore, as a scholastic association is not an ecclesiastical society, there is no reason why a man belonging to a religious or secular association, should not also be a member of a scholastic society.

The fourth reason given for the exclusion of religious from association with secular students is that religious cannot either teach or study without the authorisation and permission of their superiors, who have the power to absolve their subjects from their oaths and other engagements in order to enable them to belong to such an association. Now, we must remember, that, as the perfection of a whole consists in the union of its parts, a whole cannot exist unless its parts agree. Hence, any decrees drawn up for the welfare of a state and city, ought to be formulated with a view to the advantage of all its members. Any statutes which would hinder the unity of a commonwealth, ought to be abolished. For laws are established in order to preserve the concord of a state, and not to promote internal dissension. In the same way, there ought not to exist in any scholastic association, statutes

which do not suit all students alike. The words of the Apostle, (*Rom. xvi.* 17), "Now I beseech you, brethren," etc., quoted by our opponents in support of their objections, are no argument on their side. First, because those words of St. Paul do not apply to religious, but to heretics, and to schismatics. This is clearly shown in the text, wherein St. Paul warns the Romans to avoid such as cause dissensions "contrary to the doctrine which they had learned," learned that is, as the Gloss explains, "from the true Apostles." Those against whom St. Paul gave this warning, were men who strove to impose the Jewish law upon the Gentiles. Again the words (2 *Thess. iii.* 6), "We charge you, brethren," etc., were not uttered against religious, but against men who passed their time in idleness and misdeeds. Of these St. Paul says, "we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling," or as the Gloss says, "providing for their necessities by iniquitous means." Again the words (2 *Tim. iii.* 1), "Know also this," etc., were written not to religious, but to heretics, "blasphemers" as St. Paul calls them, "who by their heresy blaspheme God" (Gloss). "As Jannes and Manbres resisted Moses so these also (*i.e.* heretics) resist the truth," continues the Apostle, "men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith." It is true that he says, that the heretics of whom he speaks, had "an appearance indeed of Godliness," *i.e.*, of religion; but religion in this passage signifies *latria*, which makes a profession of faith. In this sense, it is, as St. Augustine says, (lib. 10 *De civitate Dei*), equivalent to piety.

But even granted, that all, or some, religious were as infamous as certain men consider them to be, that

would be no reason for excluding them from intercourse with others. The Gloss, referring to the passage of St. Paul (1 *Cor. v.*), concerning the man guilty of incest, wherein he bids the Corinthians not so much as to eat with such an one, observes that, "the Apostle's words, 'if anyone that is named a brother,' show, that men are not to condemn each other, rashly and carelessly; but, that it is only after judgment has been pronounced, that any sinner is to be excluded from communion with the Church. If such a sinner cannot be judicially excommunicated, he must be tolerated." We have no right to exclude any man from the society of his fellows, unless he be, by his own confession, found guilty of some crime, or be denounced, and convicted, by some secular or ecclesiastical tribunal. Hence, a man may not be condemned on suspicion, or by someone usurping the office of judge. He must be tried, accused, and convicted, according to the law of God, interpreted by the Church. Hence, even were religious as reprobate as they are said to be, they ought not to be excluded from intercourse with the laity, unless they have been brought to judgment, and have been condemned.

The attempt to derogate from the authority of the Apostles, is not only based on false premises, but is closely akin to heresy. For we find in the Decretals (dist. *XXII.* cap. *Omnes.*) the following passage: "Whosoever endeavours to wrest from the Roman Church the privilege bequeathed to her by the supreme head of all the churches, is, undoubtedly, guilty of heresy." And again, "He acts contrary to faith, who acts against her who is the Mother of the Faith." Now Christ granted to the Roman Church the privilege of being obeyed by all, as He Himself is obeyed, in order, as

says St. Cyril, bishop of Alexandria (*Lib. II. Thesaurorum*), "that we may continue to be members under our Head, the Roman Pontiff, seated on the throne of the Apostles. From him must we learn what we are to believe and uphold. We are bound to revere him, and to entreat him for all things. To him alone, does it belong to rebuke and to correct, and to unloose, in the place of Him who has established him. To none other has this power been given, but to him alone, before whom, all men do, by the divine command, abase their heads, and who is, by all the princes of the world, obeyed as if he were Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself." Hence, it is clear, that anyone who maintains that the Pope need not be obeyed, is a heretic.

The objection that, according to law, no one can be forced to join an association against his will, applies only to a private society, established by two or three members. But a man can be compelled to form part of a public association, which cannot exist without the consent of authority. Thus, a prince may force the inhabitants of a certain city to accept an individual as their fellow-citizen; and an ecclesiastical society can be compelled to accept a man as a canon, or a brother. Hence, as any general scholastic association is, in a certain sense, a society, any man may be obliged, by the authority of a superior, to belong to it.

The assertion that the Apostolic authority is limited to ecclesiastical affairs, is false. The president of a republic is bound to provide food for those over whom he rules, and to undertake the proper education and training of the young (10 *Ethic*). He is, likewise, obliged to supervise the legislation of his republic, and to establish rules for the well-being of the citizens

(1 *Ethic*). Thus, we see, that the legislation concerning education, is one of the duties of the president of a republic. It must, therefore, come under the authority of the Apostolic See, by which the whole Church is governed.

The last objection is founded on an absolute falsehood. The association of religious with the laity, in matters concerning education, is not intended for the destruction, but rather for the advancement, of learning. Hence, there can be no possible doubt that, by the authority of the Apostolic See, seculars may be compelled to admit religious into their scholastic societies.

CHAPTER IV

IS IT LAWFUL FOR A RELIGIOUS, WHO HAS NOT THE CURE OF SOULS, TO PREACH AND HEAR CONFESSIONS?[1]

THE enemies of religious, not content with trying to hinder them from producing fruit in the Church by teaching and expounding the Holy Scriptures, endeavour to do still further and greater harm, by preventing them from preaching and hearing confessions, in the hopes, that, thus, they may be rendered unable either to encourage the faithful in virtue, or to eradicate vice. They that act in this manner, clearly show themselves to be those persecutors of the Church, who, as St. Gregory says (*20 Moral*, on the words *Quasi caputio tunicae*), "make a special effort to hinder the word of preaching."

These enemies of religion adduce several arguments in support of their persecution. First, they quote the words which occur XVI. quaest. I., "The office of a monk is one thing: that of a cleric is another. Clerics feed their sheep: I (being a monk) am fed." Again in VII. quaest. I. cap. *Nequaquam*, the following words are

[1] "Who has not the cure (or care) of souls," *i.e.* to whom the spiritual charge of a parish or district is not committed by the Church. According to the ordinary ecclesiastical law, religious do not, unless for exceptional reasons, undertake the care of a parish. In case of need, or in countries where there is a paucity of secular priests (as in England and America), this law is in abeyance.—EDITOR.

found: "The duty of the monastic life is not to teach, nor to preside, nor to feed others with the word of God, but to be subject." To preach is to feed with the Divine Word, as is seen in John xxi. 17. The Gloss on the words "feed my sheep," says, that "to feed the sheep of Christ is to strengthen the faithful lest they fall away." Hence, monks, and religious who are counted as monks, cannot preach. This is more clearly laid down in *XVI. quaest. I. cap.* ADJICIMUS, in which the following passage occurs: "We declare that, with the exception of the priests of the Lord, no one has license to preach, be he layman or monk, no matter how great a reputation for learning he may enjoy." Again, in CAP. *Juxta*, we read as follows: "We ordain, that monks shall cease entirely from preaching to the people." St. Bernard, likewise, says, in his work on the Canticles: "Preaching does not beseem a monk; it is not expedient for a novice; it is not permitted to anyone who is not sent, to preach."

Again, it is argued that they who nourish the people with the word of God, ought also to minister to their temporal necessities. For, as the Gloss says, "to feed the sheep of Christ, means to strengthen the faithful, lest they fall away; and, if necessary, to provide for their temporal needs." As religious are, by their profession of poverty, unable to supply the people with material necessities, they cannot feed them, by preaching the word of God.

The prophet Ezekiel asks: "Should not the flocks be fed by the shepherds?" (*xxxiv.* 2). By "shepherds," says the Gloss, are signified bishops, priests, and deacons, to whom the flock is committed. Hence, religious, being neither bishops, priests nor deacons, and having no charge of the flock, may not preach.

Again: we read, (*Rom. x.* 15), "How shall they preach, unless they be sent?" But, Our Lord has sent none but the twelve Apostles (*Luke ix.*), and the seventy-two disciples (*Luke x*). The "twelve Apostles," says the Gloss, represent bishops; and the "seventy-two disciples" the priests of the second rank, or parish priests. St. Paul likewise (1 *Cor. xii.*) speaks of "helps," meaning those who assist their superiors, as Titus helped St. Paul, or as archdeacons help bishops. Religious, therefore, being neither bishops, parish priests, nor archdeacons, have no right to preach.

We read in the decretals (*dist. LXVIII.*), "Chorepiscopi[1] are strictly forbidden both to this Holy See and to all bishoprics throughout the entire world. This institution is an abuse and corruption." The reason of the prohibition is given in these words, "For, Our Lord only, as we know, established two orders, to wit, the twelve Apostles, and the seventy-two disciples. Whence this order arose, we know not, but, as there is no reason for its existence, it must be abolished." Preaching religious (our adversaries add), being neither bishops (*i.e.* successors of the Apostles), nor parish priests (*i.e.*

[1] The Chorepiscopi are again spoken of by our author, and their office is described by him. See page 128. Their origin is uncertain; but there is no record of them before the fourth century. It is generally thought that they were not, as a rule, really bishops, but priests who assisted the bishops in distant or country parts of their dioceses. They were vicars of the bishop. They had power to confer minor orders, probably even the subdiaconate. They made visitations for the bishops, attended to the different institutions connected with the Church and the poor, and, in their respective districts, helped in the administration of the diocese to which they belonged, and to the bishop of which they were subject. As St. Thomas reminds his readers (page 128), abuses having crept in through their unjustifiable "usurpation of the episcopal office," they were suppressed in the ninth, or early tenth century.—EDITOR.

successors to the seventy-two disciples), ought, likewise, to be suppressed.

Dionysius (CAP. VI. *Ecclesiast. hierarch.*), says that, "the monastic Order ought not to be in a position of superiority to others," or, according to another version, "is not instituted for the purpose of guiding other men." Now, men are led to God by teaching and preaching. Hence, neither monks, nor other religious, ought to preach, or to teach.

The hierarchy of the Church is modelled on the celestial hierarchy, according to the words (*Exod. xxv.* 40), "Look, and make it according to the pattern that was shown thee in the mount." Now, in Heaven, angels of an inferior rank never exercise the functions proper to those of a superior degree. Since, then, the monastic order is counted among the lesser orders of the Church, monks, and other religious, ought not to perform the office of preaching, which belongs to bishops, and other prelates of a higher rank (Dionysius, CAP. VI. *Ecclesiast. hierarch.*).

Again, when a religious preaches, he does so either with power, or without power. If he preach without power, he is a false apostle. If he preach with power, he has a right to demand the means of subsistence. Our Lord, when sending forth His Apostles to preach, bade them take with them nothing on the way save only a staff (*Mark vi.*). This staff signifies, (according to the Gloss), the power of accepting the necessaries of life, from those subject to them. Now, it does not seem fitting that religious should demand the means of support. Therefore, they ought not to preach.

Bishops have more right to preach than have religious, who are not entrusted with the cure of souls. But, a bishop cannot preach outside his diocese, unless

he be requested to do so by other bishops or priests. For, it is clearly laid down (*IX. quaest. III.*), "Let no Primate, or Metropolitan presume to judge the church, or parish, or anyone belonging to the parish of another diocese"; and the same rule is given in several other chapters. Therefore, religious, who have neither diocese nor parishes, may not preach, unless specially invited to do so.

A preacher ought not to build upon another man's foundation, nor to glory in another man's converts. He ought, rather, to imitate St. Paul who says, (*Rom. xv.* 20), "I have so preached this gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation." And, again, the same Apostle says, (2 *Cor. x.* 15), "Not glorying beyond measure in other men's labours," which words the Gloss explains as meaning "not glorying where another has laid the foundation of faith, which would be to glory beyond measure." In the same chapter, St. Paul uses the expression, "not to glory in another man's rule," which the Gloss interprets as signifying, "not to glory in those who are under the government of another." Therefore, those who have not the cure of souls ought not to preach to such of the faithful as are entrusted to others. They ought, rather, to lay the foundation of the faith among unbelievers.

The adversaries of religious, not content with these efforts to prevent them from preaching, endeavour, likewise, to prove that they have no right to hear confessions. In support of this opinion, they quote from XVI. quaest. I., Cap. *Placuit:* "We positively, and irrevocably, decree, that no monk shall administer penance to anyone." And, in another chapter, we find the words: "Let no monk presume to administer

penance, to receive a child to baptism, to visit or anoint the sick, to bury the dead, or to meddle with any office of the kind." Again (*Cap. Interdicimius*), the following words occur: "We forbid abbots and monks to impose public penance, or to visit or anoint the sick." From all these passages it appears evident, that monks and religious, (who are included under the same laws), have no right to hear confessions.

Further, in the book of Proverbs (*xxvii.* 23) the following exhortation is addressed to priests in charge of churches: "Be diligent to know the countenance of thy cattle." The Gloss thus comments on these words: "The Pastor of a church is bidden to take diligent care of those committed to him. He must know their doings, and he must remember to correct the vices which he may observe among them." But how is the pastor of a church to know the actions and failings of those under him, save by confession? Hence, the faithful should not confess to any except to their own parish priest.

We further find, that the following words were pronounced by Pope Innocent in a general council (*extra de paenitentiis et remissis*).[1] "Every one of the faithful, of both sexes, shall, on reaching years of discretion, confess all his sins privately at least once a year to his own priest. He who is thus absolved of his sins, need not confess them again." Hence it follows, that, if any, save a parish priest, had the right to hear confessions and to give absolution, the faithful would not be bound, once in the year, to make their confession to their own parish priest. Now, as religious are not parish priests, and have not charge of the

[1] The Fourth Lateran, or Twelfth Œcumenical, Council, held under Pope Innocent III. A.D. 1215 (Canon xxi.).—EDITOR.

faithful, they ought not to hear confessions nor to absolve penitents.

The faithful are, likewise, bound, according to the same decretal, to receive the sacraments from their own priests. None but those in due dispositions ought to receive the sacraments. As a priest can only, by means of confession, judge of the state of soul of him to whom he administers the sacraments, it follows, that only parish priests can be empowered to hear confessions and to give absolution.

It is necessary that the Church should avoid not only sin, but the risk of sin, "that I may cut off the occasion from them," as St. Paul says (2 *Cor. xi.* 12). Now, if the faithful are at liberty to confess to others, besides to their own priests, many may say that they have been to confession, and yet approach the sacraments without confession. The parish priest would be powerless to hinder this abuse. Therefore, Religious ought not to be allowed to hear confessions, as they are not parish priests.

The power to absolve sinners, belongs only to him, whose duty it is to correct them. Dionysius, in his epistle to Demophylus the monk, expressly says, that correction is the office, not of monks, but of priests. Hence, religious ought not to administer absolution to penitents. As religious have no defined province, or diocese, or parish, they may, if they be allowed to preach or hear confessions at all, do so anywhere. Their power therefore exceeds that of bishops, primates, or patriarchs, who are not universal rulers. Even the Pope has forbidden himself to be called Bishop of the Universe. And in Decretis (dist. XCIX.) it is distinctly laid down, that, "no Patriarch shall ever make

use of the name, Universal." The same prohibition is repeated in the next chapter.

Arguments are further brought forward to prove, that religious cannot, by authority of bishops, preach or hear confessions. It is objected, that a man no longer possesses what he gives away; and, therefore, if bishops commit the charge of parishes to parish priests, the care of those parishes belongs no longer to the bishops themselves, but to the parish priests. Hence, they cannot give to religious faculties to preach and hear confessions, without the consent of the parish priests. Again, it is urged, that, by laying on a priest the care of a parish, the bishop frees himself from its responsibility, which rests on the priest to whom the charge is committed: "keep this man: and if he shall slip away, thy life shall be for his life" (3 *Kings xx.* 39). If a bishop were answerable for all the parishes in his diocese, his responsibility and burthen would be intolerable. The care of each parish belongs to the priest appointed to take charge of it; and the bishop should not interfere with it further.

It is further maintained, that, as a bishop is subject to his archbishop, so are priests subject to their bishops. But archbishops cannot meddle with the subjects of a bishop, unless he be proved guilty of negligence. "Let archbishops do nothing in matters concerning the affairs of the bishops without taking counsel with them" (*IX. quaest. III.*). On the same grounds, bishops must not meddle with the affairs of parish priests, without their consent; unless a priest be proved guilty of negligence or fault. Each parish priest is the bridegroom of the church entrusted to him. But, if other clergy, besides those commissioned by the bishops, exercise in parish churches the ministry of preaching or

hearing confessions, the Church will have many bridegrooms. This state of affairs would clearly be opposed to the decree (*VII. quaest. I.*), ordaining that "as it is unlawful for a wife to commit adultery, or to be judged or disposed of during the lifetime of her husband, without his permission; so the spouse of a bishop (*i.e.*, his church or parish), may not, during his lifetime, be, without his will and consent, judged or disposed of; neither is it lawful to exercise ministry in such a church or parish." And this prohibition, as Gratian says, applies not only to bishops, but to all ministers of the Church.

Our opponents, also, endeavour to prove, that religious are not, even by the permission of the Apostolic See, allowed to preach or hear confessions. For, not even the authority of the Pope can establish any custom, or make any law opposed to the statutes of the Fathers. This is clearly expressed XXV. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Contra statuta*: "If it be against the statutes of the early Fathers, that any should preach or hear confessions, save only the priests of the Lord, permission so to do can be given to no one, even as a privilege granted by the Pope" (Cf also XVI. quaest. I.). We, also, find in XXV. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Sunt quidam*, the following words: "If, which God forbid, the Roman Pontiff should try to overthrow the teaching of the Apostles and Prophets, he would be convicted, not of giving an opinion, but of falling into error." If, then, there be an Apostolic ordinance "not to glory in another man's rule" (2 *Cor.* x.) the Pope, were he to confer the privilege just mentioned, upon any man, would commit an error.

It is a law, that, when a sovereign grants permission to a man to erect a building in a public place, it is

understood that he to whom this privilege is conceded, may only use it in so far as it be not to the prejudice of anyone. (See *Ne quid in loco publico ædificare*, lib. I. *Si quis a principe.*) And in XXV. QUAEST. II. CAP. *de ecclesiasticis*, St. Gregory says: "As we defend our own property, so let each one of us be jealous for the rights of his own church. I will not, through partiality, concede to any man more than he deserves; nor shall any cunning cause me to refuse to anyone that which is his right." But, if a man preach or hear confessions in a church uninvited, he is doing an injustice to the parish priest. Hence, no permission for the exercise of these functions ought to be granted, without the consent of the clergy of the parish.

Again, if a sovereign grant to any individual freedom to make a will, he does not, thereby, give him permission to do more than to draw up an ordinary and legitimate will. It is not conceivable that a Roman governor, the protector of law, should desire, by one word, to prevent the observance of the statutes concerning wills, which have been framed with such laborious care. (*De in-offic. testament. lib.* SI QUANDO.) In like manner, if the Pope should grant to any persons the privilege of preaching or hearing confessions, the permission ought to be understood in its usual sense, *i.e.*, subject to the wishes of parish priests.

A monk receiving priestly Orders, has not the faculties for performing the functions attached to the sacerdotal office, (*e.g.* the administration of the Sacraments), unless he be canonically appointed to the care of a parish.[1] We, further, find it laid down (XVI.

[1] For hearing confessions, preaching, and the administration of sacraments, *jurisdiction* is needed as well as valid ordination; *i.e.* the care of souls must be given by one to whom they are entrusted.

quaest. I., cap. *Adjicimus Monachi autem*), "If the office of preaching be, by a Papal privilege, committed to any man, he cannot exercise it when souls have not been entrusted to him."

Moreover, neither the Pope nor any other mortal man can overturn, or alter, the eccesiastical hierarchy, which has been divinely instituted. For this power has been given to no one "unto destruction, but unto edification" (2 *Cor. x.*). But, in the order of the Church, monks are amongst those who are to be made perfect (see CAP. VI. *Ecclesiast. hierarch.*). Nothing, therefore, can so alter this order, as to place monks amongst those whose office it is to make others perfect.

Those who argue in this manner, strive, further, to prove, that religious have no right to seek permission from bishops or parish priests, to preach, or hear confessions. If they do so, they are actuated by an ambitious desire of usurping the ecclesiastical office. In VIII. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Sciendum*, we meet with the following words: "When a command is laid upon a man to assume an exalted position, he who obeys the order loses the merit of obedience, if he ambitiously aspire to the post." Now, preaching and hearing confessions are duties of the ecclesiastical state, and, therefore, confer dignity and power. Hence, religious cannot, without notable ambition, ask for permission to preach and hear confessions. They can only do so when required. Here, then, is the source from which the error mentioned before has arisen. For as Boetius says, the road of faith runs between two heresies; just as virtue keeps on the centre line between vice. For,

In ecclesiastical language a priest, although properly ordained, must receive "*Faculties*" from the Bishop of a diocese, or for the entire church, from the Pope: see p. 113.—EDITOR.

virtue consists in preserving the due balance of things; and by doing too much or too little, man falls from virtue. In the same way, he that holds either more or less than the truth, falls into error; but truth is the centre line of faith. Now, it must be remembered, that there have been certain heretics, and some now exist, who consider that the power of the ecclesiastical ministry depends upon sanctity of life, and that he who is not holy loses this power, and that this power is increased in proportion to a man's holiness.

This opinion does not concern our point; but, let us, for the moment presume it to be erroneous. From this error has arisen the presumption of certain men, especially of monks, who, elated by their holiness, have, at their own pleasure, usurped the functions of ecclesiastics—preaching, and giving absolution, without any episcopal commission. We find their audacity rebuked (*XVI. quaest. I.* PERVENIT AD NOS), in the following terms: "We are astonished that in your parish, certain monks, and abbots, have, contrary to the decrees of the holy Fathers, arrogated to themselves the rights and functions of bishops. They administer penance and remission of sins, bring about reconciliations, and dispose of tithes and churches. They ought not to presume to act thus, without license from the bishop, or authority of the Apostolic See." Now, in their condemnation of the presumption of these monks, certain men have fallen into the error of rashly saying, that religious are unfitted to perform the duties just enumerated, even though they be appointed thereto by the authority of the Bishop. This error is thus mentioned (*XVII. quaest. I.*), "There are certain men, filled rather with bitter jealousy than with love of truth, who, without any grounds for their

assertion, have the presumption to state, that monks, who have died to the world in order to live to God, are unworthy of exercising the priestly office, and are incapable of administering penance, of teaching Christianity, or of giving absolution, in spite of the power divinely committed to them at their ordination. But this is a complete error." Other men, again, are led by their audacity into another mistake. They assert that religious are not merely precluded, by their state of life, from exercising the sacerdotal functions; but, that, bishops cannot, without the consent of the parish priests, grant them faculties for their performance. Nay, the Pope himself, they say, cannot qualify religious to act as priests. Thus, this error leads to the same result as that which we have previously mentioned. For while one error detracts from the ecclesiastical power, the other asserts that the power of the church depends upon sanctity of life.

Our next task will be to refute this error, and we shall proceed in the following order. First, we shall show that bishops, and superior prelates, can preach, and absolve those who are under the care of priests, without needing the permission of those priests. Secondly, we shall prove that they can empower others to act in like manner. Thirdly, we shall make clear, that religious are, when commissioned by a bishop, capable of exercising these functions. Fourthly, we shall demonstrate that it is expedient, for the welfare of souls, that others, besides parish priests, should be allowed to preach, and hear confessions. Fifthly, it will be shown, that a religious order, may, advantageously, be founded for the purpose of preaching, and hearing confessions, with license from the bishops.

Sixthly, we shall reply to the objections of our adversaries.

1. The fact that a bishop has, in any parish of his diocese, all the powers of a priest, is proved by these words from X. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Sic quidam:* "All that has been established in the Church, by her ancient constitution, belongs to the office and power of a bishop." Again, in the next chapter, the same is laid down. Now, the temporal things of the Church exist for the sake of that which is spiritual. Hence, with far greater reason, the spiritual concerns of parishes are committed to the bishops. Again, in the same *quæstion* it is said, that, "every parish is to be administered under the care and supervision of the bishop, by the priest or the other clerics, whom he shall appoint, in the fear of God." In the following chapter, we likewise read, that, "a church must be governed and conducted, according to the judgment and power of the bishop, who is charged with the souls of his whole flock."

Again, a priest in charge of a parish can do nothing in it, without a general or particular permission from his bishop. Hence, XVI. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Cunctis fidelibus*, we find the following passage: "All priests, deacons, and other ecclesiastics, must, above all things, bear in mind, that they may do nothing without license from their respective bishop. Without this license, a priest cannot in his own parish say Mass, baptise, or perform any other office." Hence a bishop has more power in each parish of his diocese, than have the priests of those parishes. For, they can do nothing without the Bishop's leave.

The Gloss commenting on the words (1 *Cor. i.*), "in every place of theirs and ours," says: "these words

signify in every place originally committed to me," and the Apostle was speaking of suffragan churches, *i.e.*, churches subject to the Church of Corinth. If, then, bishops are the successors of the Apostles, and retain their office, as appears from the commentary in the Gloss on Luke x., the chief power in a parish belongs rather to the bishop, than to the parish priest. For the words, "in every place of theirs and ours," cannot mean that the church was first entrusted to St. Paul, and then taken from him, and given to another, else it would have ceased to be his.

Apollo was a priest, ministering to the Corinthians, as we know from the words (1 *Cor. iii.* 6), "Apollo watered," *i.e.*, "by baptism," (Gloss). Nevertheless, St. Paul regulated the affairs of the Church of Corinth, as we learn from his own words, "The rest I will set in order, when I come" (2 *Cor. ii.* 34). And again, "For what I have pardoned, if I have pardoned anything, for your sakes have I done it in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 10). And, again, he writes to the Corinthians (1 *Ep. iv.* 21): "What will you? Shall I come to you with a rod? or in the spirit of meekness and charity?" Again, "according to the measure of the rule, which God hath measured to us, a measure to reach even unto you" (2 *Cor. x.* 18). In another chapter, he says: "Therefore, I write these things being absent, that being present, I may not deal more severely according to the power which the Lord hath given me" (2 *Cor. xiii.* 10). This "power," as the Gloss says, was that of "binding and loosing." Hence, we clearly see, that a bishop retains full jurisdiction over the people entrusted to priests.

Again, priests are said to be successors of the seventy-two disciples, and bishops successors of the twelve

Apostles (cf. Gloss on Luke x). Now, it would be absurd to maintain, that the apostles had no power of binding or of loosing and of performing other spiritual works, without permission from the seventy-two disciples. This argument holds good in like manner, with regard to the relations between bishops and priests.

Dionysius, furthermore, says (*cap. V.* ECCL. HIER.), that, "Although the duty of the episcopate is to perfect others, that of the priesthood to enlighten them, and that of the diaconate to cleanse them; nevertheless, bishops are bound, not only to perfect but likewise to enlighten and to purify their people. In like manner, it is the office of priests, not only to enlighten, but likewise to purify their flocks." He gives the following reason for his assertion: "Inferior powers cannot become capable of the higher works; and it would be unjust were they to aspire to such a dignity. But the more divine powers are able to perform inferior operations, as we see by the words of Maximus."

It is plain, then, that, if a priest can do the work of a deacon, a bishop can accomplish all, and more than all, that is done by a priest. A priest can, without permission from his deacon, read the gospel in his church. Therefore a bishop can, without license from the parish priest, absolve and administer the other Sacraments in any parish church of his diocese. What a man does through the agency of another he can do himself; but when priests give absolution it is their bishop who is said to absolve by their instrumentality. Hence Dionysius (*VI. cap.* ECCLESIAST. HIERARCH.) writes: "He who, according to us, is the high priest, does, by means of priests, his ministers, cleanse and illuminate us. It is he who is said to exercise these functions; because he entrusts others with the power

of performing these sacred actions in his stead." Hence, a bishop may, in his own person, give absolution, or preach.

Again, the inferior clergy owe obedience to their prelates, in all that regards their cure of souls. Thus St. Paul says (*Hebr. xiii.* 17), "Obey your prelates and be subject to them. For they watch (*i.e.*, they are solicitous for you in preaching) as being to render an account of your souls." A parishioner is more stringently bound to obey his bishop, than his parish priest. For, as the Gloss says, in the commentary on the words Rom. xiii., obedience must be paid rather to the higher than to the lower power; thus a proconsul must be obeyed rather than a governor, and an Emperor rather than a proconsul. For, obedience must be proportioned to rank. This maxim applies to spiritual, far more strongly, than to temporal affairs. Hence, bishops, who are invested with power superior to that of parish priests, are, at the same time, more fully responsible for the people. The words of the book of Proverbs (*xxvii.* 25), "Be diligent to know the countenance of thy cattle," refer to the cure of souls, and are chiefly carried out by hearing confessions. Therefore, it beseems bishops, even more than parish priests, to hear the confessions of the faithful.

As the seventy-two elders, of whom we read (*Num. vi.*), were given to Moses as assistants; so priests are appointed as coadjutors to bishops, who could not bear their burdens unaided. Hence, at the ordination of a priest, the bishop makes use of the following, and other similar words: "The weaker we are, the more do we stand in need of assistance." But, the fact that a bishop has a coadjutor, does not deprive him of his own powers; for he still continues

to be the primary agent, and priests are his ministers. Hence, bishops have as good, yea better right, than priests, to perform every sacerdotal office, without the permission of any priest.

Further, bishops hold, in the Church, the place of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore Dionysius says (*Cap. V.* ECCLESIAST. HIERARCH.), "The Pontifical order is the first of divine ordinances, and supreme in the hierarchy of the Church. In it all degrees of the ecclesiastical hierarchy are consummated, and made perfect." As we behold the universal hierarchy summed up in Jesus, so each particular hierarchy attains its fulness in its own chief priest, *i.e.*, its bishop. St. Peter (1 *Ep. ii.* 25), says of Christ, "be ye converted to the pastor and bishop of your souls." These words also apply, chiefly, to the Roman Pontiff, "before whom," as St. Cyril remarks, "every head must, by divine right, bow; and whom all must obey, as they would obey Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself." St. Chrysostom says, commenting on the text of St. John, "feed my lambs": "These words are equivalent to saying, 'do thou be, in my place, head and master of thy brethren.'" Hence, it is absurd, and almost blasphemous, to say that a bishop, who represents Christ, cannot exercise the power of the keys over any person in his diocese.

In order to give absolution, it is necessary to have the power of the keys, and jurisdiction, over every soul in a diocese. By this the matter is determined; and, for the administration of penance as for the other Sacraments, all that is necessary is the power of Orders, and the matter, together with the appointed form and due intention. Now, a bishop being a priest has the keys. He has jurisdiction over every member

of his diocese, otherwise he could not summon them to appear before him. Hence, without the permission of any priest, he can give absolution to everyone in his diocese.

It is argued, that it is necessary for parish priests to hear confessions, because they have the duty of administering the Blessed Eucharist, which no one should receive who is in mortal sin. But, Confirmation and Holy Orders, likewise, require a state of grace in their recipients; and these Sacraments can be given by bishops only. Hence, a bishop is entitled to hear the confession of every person in his diocese.

Further, no one can reserve to himself what is not within his own power. Now, by a common usage, bishops reserve to themselves certain cases for absolution.[1] But, in order to act thus, they must have power to absolve. Hence they must likewise have power to absolve in all other cases, in which they desire to do so.

Dionysius remarks that, in our hierarchy the episcopal power is universal, the power of priests and other ministers particular (*I. Cap. and V.* ECCLESIAST. HIERARCH.). But, as we know by philosophy, universal power acts more efficaciously on that which is subject to a particular power, than does that particular power itself. Hence, a bishop exercises the power of the keys more efficaciously on those who are subject to priests, than do priests themselves.

Further, it is plain, that no man can give to another anything that he does not himself possess. It is the

[1] These are called *Reserved Cases.* Some cases are reserved to the Pope, others to the Bishop. In order to absolve from these, *special* leave is required from the Pope or the Bishop, over and above the "faculties" which are ordinarily given.—EDITOR.

office of a bishop to give authority to priests. But, by imparting this authority, a bishop does not deprive himself of it; for spiritual gifts are only bestowed by the action of the giver on the recipient. But as an agent does not, by acting, lose the power of acting, a bishop retains all that power which he gives to parish priests.

2. Our next task will be to prove, that certain men can be commissioned by bishops to preach, and hear confessions, in the parishes entrusted to priests. For, as it is stated (*de officio judic. ordin. cap.* INTER CÆTERA), "a bishop may, with expediency, choose out certain men fit for the holy office of preaching." And again, "we enjoin that, both in cathedrals and in conventual churches, bishops should appoint certain coadjutors and fellow-workers, who shall assist, not only in the duty of preaching, but in that of hearing confessions, imposing penance, and other such offices as may pertain to the welfare of souls." From these words, it is plain, that the clerics of monastic churches, who are not parish priests, may, by the authority of the bishop, preach and hear confessions.

Again, in *Extra* DE HÆRETICIS, *cap. excommunicavimus, quia vero*, it is laid down that, "All such as have been forbidden to preach, or who have not received, publicly or privately, license to preach from the Apostolic See, or from the Catholic bishop of a place, and shall yet usurp the office of preaching, do so under pain of excommunication." Hence we see, that the Pope, or a bishop, can give to any priest authority to preach.

Further, it is certain, that the Apostles, of whom bishops are the successors, ordained certain priests in cities and villages, to dwell continually among their people. But they, likewise, sent forth others to preach

and to perform other offices, for the good of souls. Thus, St. Paul writes (1 *Cor. iv.* 17), "I have sent to you Timothy, who is my dearest son and faithful in the Lord: who will put you in mind of my ways, which are in Christ Jesus." Again (2 *Cor. xii.* 18), "I desired Titus, and I send with him a brother," *i.e.* Barnabas or Luke. The Apostle also writes to Titus (*i.* 5), "For this cause I left thee in Crete that thou mightest correct what was wanting, and that thou mightest appoint priests, as I appointed to thee." Hence, other priests, besides those in charge of parishes, may preach, and hear confessions, with license from a bishop.

The offices of preaching, and of hearing confessions, pertain both to jurisdiction and to Orders. But offices pertaining to jurisdiction, can only be exercised by those who have received Orders. Hence, if a bishop without asking permission of the parish priest, can preach or hear confessions in any parish church within his diocese; another priest, may, by the commission of the bishop, act in the same manner.

This proposition is likewise proved, by the fact, that persons seeking admission into the Church, receive from the Papal penitentiaries letters empowering them to make their confession to any priest whatsoever. And the Papal legates and penitentiaries preach everywhere, and hear confessions without asking any permission from parish priests, but solely by the authority of the Pope. This proves that commission can be given to certain priests both for preaching and for hearing confessions, without any necessity for a further license from parish priests.

3. It now remains to be proved, that religious are fit to perform the functions of preaching and hearing con-

fessions. For, in XVI. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Pervenit*, it is stated that "without the license of their own bishop monks and abbots may not presume to administer penance." Whence it follows, that religious, when authorised by the Pope or by a bishop may lawfully hear confessions. Again, in the same chapter the following words occur: "We, in our Apostolic discretion and tenderness, decree that it is lawful for monks who are priests, and who represent the Apostles, to preach, baptise, give communion, pray for sinners, impose penance, and absolve from sin."

In the next chapter, "*Sunt tamen nonnulli*," Pope Boniface speaks thus: "We believe that, by the operation of God, the office of binding and loosing may be worthily accomplished by monks in priestly orders, if they have been deservedly exalted to this rank. We further ordain, that, for the future, those shall be reprimanded who contend, that priests of the monastic profession are excluded from the exercise of the sacerdotal functions. For the higher a man's rank the greater is his power."

Again, bishops are bound, as far as possible, to imitate the divine judgments. St. Paul says (1 Cor. ii. 1), "Be ye imitators of me, as I also am of Christ." But, God has judged some monks worthy to preach without any human authorisation. This was the case with the monk Equitius, as St. Gregory relates (in *Dialog.*), and also with St. Benedict. Hence, bishops may rightly esteem certain religious to be fit to preach.

Further, everything that is lawful to secular priests is lawful, likewise, to religious, with the exception of any points forbidden by their rule. In ARG. XVI. QUAEST. I. *Sunt tamen nonnulli*, it is laid down, "that it is right for monks to absolve and to perform similar

functions. St. Benedict the gentle guide of monks has not forbidden such offices to be undertaken by religious." Secular priests, when authorised by a bishop, may preach and hear confessions. Hence, as there is no rule forbidding monks to perform these duties, they may preach and hear confessions in like manner.

It is a greater dignity for a man to preach by his own authority, than by the commission of another. Now, religious are always liable to be raised to the episcopate, in which rank they have a right to preach, and do other work expedient for the welfare of souls, at their own discretion. Why then should they be deemed unfit to preach, by the permission of a bishop?

The fact that a man is in a state of perfection does not incapacitate him from preaching. On the contrary, preaching is a ministry peculiarly befitting the perfect state professed by religious. Hence, the Gloss, commenting on the words of Esdras (1 Esdras 1), "All the rest," etc., says: "All those who have been chosen and delivered from the powers of darkness, belong to the liberty of the glory of the children of God; and they all rejoice at being declared to belong to the society of the holy city (*i.e.*, the Church); but it is the prerogative of the perfect alone to labour at building up the Church, by preaching to others." The fact that these words apply to the perfection of religious, is proved by the following words: "The more earnestly preachers instruct their hearers to love heavenly things, the less will they care about earthly goods. Nay, they will even abandon what they already possess, in the hope of obtaining an eternal heritage." This interpretation, further, appears in the interlinear commentary, which says, "all the rest," *i.e.*, "the rich who cannot preach."

Hence, religious are not less fit than others to preach, and, with the commission of a bishop, have as much right to hear confessions and to preach, as have parish priests.

On the words, "then we set forward from the river" (1 *Esdras viii.* 31), the Gloss thus comments: "Let us, likewise, call to our assistance the religious army of brethren; by whose help we may carry the souls of the faithful to the society of the elect, and to the fortress of a more perfect life; as we should carry holy vessels to the temple of the Lord."

The right of religious to preach and hear confessions is proved by the common custom of the Eastern Church, in which almost all the monks are confessors.

Again, a greater responsibility attaches to the office of legate, and to the work of confirming bishops, and setting them over churches, than to the office of preachers or confessors. But, as we know, that the first and more onerous duties are entrusted to religious, there is no reason why they should not perform the less important ones.

Again, the work of hearing lawsuits has less connection with the religious life, than have the tasks of preaching or absolving. But, as religious are employed in the former office, they may, with far greater reason, be entrusted with the latter functions.

4. It now remains for us to show, that it is expedient for the salvation of souls, that others, besides parish priests, should preach and hear confessions.

Our first proof is taken from the words of Our Lord (*Matt. ix.* 37), "The harvest indeed is great"—or as the Gloss explains, "There is a vast multitude capable of receiving the word and of bearing fruit"—"but the labourers are few," *i.e.* (according to the Gloss), "the

preachers who shall gather together the church of the elect." "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send labourers into His harvest." These words show, that it is salutary for the Church, that the word of God should be announced to the faithful by many preachers, with an ever increasing number of believers.

Again, it is written in the Book of Wisdom (vi. 26), "In a multitude of counsellors there is wisdom." These words are interpreted by the interlinear commentary to signify, "a multitude of preachers brings health to the whole world."

St. Paul says (2 *Tim. ii.* 2), "The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men," *i.e.*, "men of sound faith" (Gloss), "who shall be fit," *i.e.*, "fitted by their good life, their learning and eloquence" (Gloss), "to teach others also." In other words, "the office of preaching ought to be committed to those capable of fulfilling it" (Gloss).

Again, the Gloss has the following comment on the words of Esdras (1 *Esd. iii.*), "all that were come from captivity unto Jerusalem": "Not only is it the duty of bishops and priests to build up the house of God, whereby is signified His faithful people; but the people themselves, who are called out of captivity into Jerusalem, the vision of peace, ought likewise to require ministry of the Word from them that know how to preach."

St. Gregory (*XIX. Moral*) remarks on the passage in Job xxix., "when I washed my feet with butter": "What shall we bishops say, who care not to impart the Word entrusted to us, when we see this married man who does not suffer himself to be hindered from

preaching, either by his worldly garb, or his pressing occupations?" By these words we see, that others, besides prelates and parish priests, may rightfully exercise the office of preaching.

We learn the same lesson from many other passages of the Old Testament. David is praised for having extended the worship of God, and for having established twenty-four priests for the benefit of the people (1 *Paral. xxiii. and xxiv.*). The same thing is related of Ezechias (2 *Paral. xxx.* 6): "The posts went with letters, by commandment of the King and his princes, to all Israel and Juda, proclaiming, according to the King's orders: 'Ye children of Israel, turn again to the Lord God,'" etc. Assuerus, again, as we are told in the book of Esther (*Cap. vii.*), sent swift messages through the provinces, to announce the deliverance of the people of God. With much greater reason, then, may others, besides parish priests, be commissioned to preach, and to perform such like offices, for the salvation of souls.

St. Gregory, in a homily (*cap. V. Part I. on Ezechiel*), says: "The pastors of souls and they who have undertaken the responsibility of feeding the flock of Christ, ought very seldom, if ever, to change their dwelling. But those, who, for love of God take journeys, for the sake of preaching, may be compared to wheels of fire. For the zeal which devours them, and wherewith they inflame others, causes them to travel swiftly from place to place." This is another proof, that the office of preaching should be committed, not only to parish priests, but to others who can, by travelling from one place to another, spread the knowledge of the truth.

Again, it behoves a preacher of the Word to be free from any other occupation; whereas parish priests are

constantly engaged in good works, and in ecclesiastical business. The Apostles said, "It is not fit that we should leave the word of God and serve tables" (*Acts vi.* 2). On this account, it is right, that those who are in charge of parishes, should be assisted by others not thus occupied.

The necessity for priests devoted to the ministry of preaching is, furthermore, shown by the great ignorance prevailing in some places amongst many of the clergy; some of whom know not even how to speak in Latin. It is rare to find any who are conversant with the Scriptures. Yet a knowledge of the holy writings is essential to those who would preach the word of God. Hence, if preaching be entrusted, solely, to parish priests, the faithful will be greatly the losers. The ignorance which prevails among the clergy, is, also, most detrimental in the duty of hearing confessions. For, as St. Augustine says, (*in libro De Paenitentia*), "If any man desire to confess his sins, let him seek out a priest who knows how to bind and to loose. For if he be negligent in the matter, he may be neglected by Him who incites him and moves him to seek for mercy; and so both may fall into the ditch, which, in his folly, he strove not to avoid."

Additional priests, deputed to preach, and to act as confessors, are, likewise, called for, on account of the great multitude of souls often committed to the care of one pastor. For, were some parish priests to devote their whole lives to the task, they would scarcely be able to hear the confessions of all their flock. It happens, likewise, that some of the faithful having no opportunity of confessing to any save to their parish priest, will abstain altogether from confession. For, they are ashamed to acknowledge their sins to those

whom they see every day. Sometimes, again, they fancy that the priest is unfriendly to them, and the like. Hence, bishops act very judiciously, in providing them with other confessors, and thus preserving them from despair.

5. The foregoing reflections naturally lead us to consider the expediency of a religious order being instituted, for the express purpose of assisting parish priests in preaching and hearing confessions. Episcopal permission would, of course, be needed to authorise the brethren of such an order to undertake their duties.

Every religious order is based on the model of the Apostolic life. We are told that the Apostles practised community of life: "all things were common to them" (*Acts iv.*). The Gloss says, that, "the word '*common*,' is, in Greek, rendered by *caena*, or common meal, whence come the words *cenobites*, *i.e.* dwellers in common, and *caenobia*, *i.e.* common dwelling places." The Apostles practised this mode of life, in order, that, leaving all things, they might be at liberty to preach the Gospel throughout the world. For the same reason, they prescribed this common life to their successors. Hence, a religious order is, peculiarly, well adapted to the office of preaching.

St. James says, "Religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the orphan and the widow in their tribulation." The most necessary form of visiting those in affliction, is that which is practised by such as labour for the salvation of souls. A religious order may, then, with great advantage, be instituted with this object in view, that its members may seek out such as are in trouble, and encourage them to have patience, and to hope in the promises of Scripture.

In the interlinear commentary we find, on the words,

"it is not fit that we should leave the word of God and serve tables (*Acts vi.* 2), the following observation: "Food for the soul is better than banquets for the body." Now, certain orders have already been instituted for the purpose of assisting men in their corporeal needs; it is still more fitting, that another order should be established, to minister to their spiritual wants." St. Augustine says: "It is better to nourish the soul that will live for ever with the Lord, than the body that must decay in death. The health of the body depends upon the condition of the soul; but the soul's health does not depend upon bodily constitution."

It is more seemly for a religious to fight with spiritual weapons, than with sword and shield. But there are already in existence several military orders. It is therefore expedient that an order should be founded, for the purposes of spiritual warfare. The religious of such an order, ought, principally, to preach the gospel, according to the exhortation of St. Paul, "Labour like a good soldier of Christ" (2 *Tim. ii.* 3), "by preaching the gospel against the enemies of the Faith," as the Gloss explains.

It is essential, that they who labour for the salvation of souls, should be remarkable, both for learning, and for sanctity of life. It is not easy to find enough priests, with such a reputation, to take charge of all the parishes throughout the world: neither is it possible, among secular priests, to carry out the statute of the Council of Lateran, which enjoins that there should be teachers of theology in every metropolitan church. This desire of the Church is, however, through the mercy of God, being carried out through the instrumentality of religious. In the words of Isaias (*xi.* 9), "The earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord."

Thus, it is highly expedient, that a religious order should be founded, in which the brethren are learned, and addicted to study, and, at the same time, have leisure to help secular priests, who are not so well adapted to teach theology.

The advantage of such orders, is further proved by the beneficial results produced by their labours. For, in many parts of the world, heresy has been destroyed; many infidels have been converted; careless Christians have been instructed in the law of God; and many have been brought to penance, by the efforts of religious. Hence, anyone who condemns such orders as useless, is clearly sinning against the Holy Ghost, by envy of the grace, whereby God co-operates in the labours of these men.

Again, in XXV. quaest. I., we read the following words: "No one can, either safely or rightly, pass rash judgments either on the Divine constitutions, or on the decrees of the Holy See." Since, therefore, certain religious Orders, as is proved by their very name, (for, as St. Augustine puts it in his book *on the Christian Life*, "no one is called by a name without a cause"), have been established, by the Apostolic See, for the purposes of which we have spoken, anyone who condemns them, does, by so doing, himself incur condemnation.

6. We must now proceed to our final task, that of answering the objections of our opponents.

Their first argument is, that the duty of monks is, "not to feed a flock, but to be fed." This saying is to be understood as meaning, that monks have not, by right of their monastic profession, the office of instructing the faithful. It was directed against the mistaken notion, that sanctity of life alone, is sufficient qualifica-

tion for the ecclesiastical state. But, it is equally true, that, it is not the duty of a secular priest to feed a flock, unless he have the cure of souls, or unless he bear a commission from those holding such a charge. Religious are as fitted as are the secular clergy, for the office of preaching. The only difference between them is, that religious require a double license, viz., the authorisation of a bishop, and permission from the superior of their order, without which they may not act. The second objection must be answered in exactly the same way. For the words, "Let none, save the priests of the Lord, dare to preach," is true, if we understand them to mean, that no one may preach without a commission to do so.

In like manner, the prohibition to monks to preach, which is quoted against us, is to be understood to mean that monks may not, merely because they are monks, arrogate to themselves the office of preaching. And, in the same way, when it is said, that "it does not beseem a monk to preach," the words mean that the monastic state does not, of itself, confer a right to preach.

When it is objected, that they who feed the people with the word of God, ought, likewise, to supply their material necessities, we reply that this is perfectly true in cases where such charity is possible. For, as St. John says (1 *Ep. iii.* 17), "He that hath the substance of this world and shall see his brother in need, and shall close the bowels of his mercy against him, how does the charity of God abide in him?" But, almsgiving is not always the necessary accompaniment to preaching; otherwise the Apostles would not have preached, for they possessed nothing to give. "Silver and gold have I none" (Acts iii. 6). Nevertheless, religious, who themselves are poor, are able, at times,

to provide for the wants of the poor out of the donations made to them by the wealthy. St. Paul tells us, that, when he was sent to preach to the Gentiles, he was careful to remember the poor (*Galat. ii.*). To the objection, that pastors are bound to feed their flocks, we reply, that they cannot feed them entirely by their own efforts; they must be assisted by others, to whom they entrust the task. For he, by whose authority a deed is accomplished, is held responsible for its performance.

When it is urged, that none have a right to preach, save those who are sent; and that we only read of Our Lord's sending the twelve Apostles and the seventy-two disciples, our answer is, that they who are sent by God have power to send forth others. St. Paul sent Timothy to preach: "therefore have I sent to you Timothy" (1 *Cor. iv.* 17). Thus, likewise, other men may be sent forth to preach, at the bidding of bishops and priests. But, all thus sent, must be regarded as the emissaries of the Lord; because it is by His power that they receive their commission. And all who are thus authorised to preach must, although not archdeacons, be regarded as the coadjutors of the bishops, because they are rendering them important assistance, such, indeed, "as Titus gave to St. Paul, or as archdeacons afford to their bishops" (Gloss). Hence, it, by no means, follows, that none save archdeacons, can assist bishops in their labours. For, when any priest, bearing the commission of a bishop, preaches, or hears confessions, these functions are accounted as having been performed by the bishop himself. Although it may be true that only two orders were instituted by Our Lord for the purpose of preaching; the Church, or the Pope, to whom is confided all ecclesiastical power, could

found a third order of preachers. For, as we are reminded by the Master of the Sentences, there were, in the early Church, two degrees only in Holy Orders, priests to wit and deacons; but in course of time other grades were established.

Our answer to the next objection which follows, is, that the decree to which it refers, regards a certain order of men called chorepiscopi, who were ordained, not in cities but in hamlets and villages, and who were invested with certain faculties not granted to ordinary priests, such, for instance, as that of conferring minor orders. For some time, these chorepiscopi were recognised in the Church as invested with ordinary powers; but they were finally suppressed, (as is related in the same distinction,) on account of their unjustifiable usurpation of the episcopal functions. Thus, the decree mentioned in this objection, bears no reference to those religious, who, not having ordinary faculties, act as confessors, by commission from a bishop. Such an order of religious, does not exist in opposition to the number of orders established by Our Lord; since, as it has been instituted by His authority, it is rightly regarded as having been ordained by Himself, (see the words of Dionysius quoted above). The only conclusion concerning monks that can be drawn from this passage of Dionysius, is, that monks have not, on account of their profession, the status of prelates, or of those whose duty it is to guide others to God. There is, however, no reason wherefore a monk should not receive ordinary power, or a commission to guide others, especially as the decree quoted merely says that the monastic orders are not instituted in order to be in command of others, or to guide. It does not say, that the members of these orders cannot, or ought

not, to hold such a position. This is evident from the authority of Dionysius quoted above.

The argument that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is a copy of the heavenly hierarchy, is only partially true. In the heavenly, but not in the earthly hierarchy, there is a distinction of gratuitous gifts, according to the distinction of orders. Hence, as the angelic nature is immutable, the angels of an inferior rank cannot be transferred to a superior grade, as is the case with mortals in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Nevertheless, in the celestial hierarchy, angels of an inferior order can remain in their own rank, and yet can perform the functions pertaining to a higher grade. Thus Dionysius (*XIII. Caelest. hierarch.*) says: "The angel that cleansed the lips of Isaias is called a SERAPH, because he fulfilled the office of the Seraphim." And St. Gregory, in his homily on the hundred sheep, says that, "the spirits who are sent forth, bear names denoting the order of their ministry." Hence, it is not unseemly, if, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, a man belonging to one of the inferior orders, be commissioned to perform duties specially pertaining to a higher rank.

To the objection that religious preach "either with power or without power," we reply, that they preach, not with ordinary power, but by that conferred by special commission. It does not, therefore, follow that they have the right of demanding means of support; for this power has not been granted them. They could, however, exercise this power, were it conferred on them by those to whom it belongs.

It is untrue to say, that if religious have faculties to preach, they possess powers superior to those of bishops or patriarchs. For, bishops, and patriarchs, can, by their ordinary power, preach in any place; but

religious, who have not the cure of souls, can never preach by ordinary power. They can preach, not by ordinary power, but only by special commission; just as a bishop can exercise episcopal functions in a diocese belonging to another, with the permission of the bishop of the diocese in which he is staying.

It is urged, that no man ought to build on a foundation laid by another. This statement is untrue, and is against the teaching of St. Paul, who says, (1 *Cor. iii.* 10), "As a wise architect I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." This "building" is explained by the Gloss, and by St. Ambrose, to signify, "preaching and teaching." When the Apostle says: "I have so preached this Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation" (*Rom. xv.* 20), his word must be understood to signify, not that it would have been unlawful for St. Paul to have built upon another man's foundation, but that he did not, at that moment, consider it expedient to do so. Hence, the Gloss, commenting on these words, says: "Lest I should build upon another man's foundation, *i.e.*, lest I should preach to those converted by other men. Not that St. Paul would not have so acted, had such a course appeared to him desirable; but that he preferred to lay the foundations of the faith in some spot, wherein it had not as yet been preached." Were it unlawful to preach where another has already taught the Word of God, St. John the Evangelist would not have preached at Ephesus, in which city St. Paul had planted the Faith; nor would St. Paul have preached at Rome, where St. Peter had already been. But what will our opponents say, if it should so happen, that the religious whom they so bitterly denounce, be divided

in such a manner that some go forth to preach the Word to unbelievers, and others remain among the faithful to assist the bishops? But this objection has, really, no connection with the point in question. For, to build on another man's foundation, and to preach to another man's converts, are not the same thing. Otherwise, every priest when preaching in his own parish would be building on another man's foundation; for his parishioners would, probably, be the converts of former priests of the parish.

The words of St. Paul, (2 *Cor. x.*), "not glorying beyond measure in other men's labour," are, by those who are averse to the preaching of religious, interpreted to mean, that to labour where another man has laid the foundations of the faith, is to glory beyond measure. The Gloss does not explain these words as signifying that, if St. Paul had laboured where another had already preached, he would have been glorying beyond measure. It understands the text to mean, that, had St. Paul taken to himself the glory of having laid the foundations of the faith in such a place, he would have gloried beyond measure.

The objection to the preaching of religious, founded on the words, "not to glory in another man's rule," is due to a misinterpretation of the commentary of the Gloss on this passage. The Gloss is quoted as saying, "not to glory in another man's rule, *i.e.*, in those who are under the government of another." This is a misquotation. The passage of the Gloss referred to, runs as follows: "Our rule, *i.e.*, our ministry, which is imposed upon us by God, is to preach the Gospel freely, not only in a few places, but in those (places) which are beyond your present dwelling. But we hope not to glory in another man's rule; for those who are at a

distance from you, are not under any man's government." If the passage in the Gloss, really, stood as it is represented by our adversaries, it would be difficult to understand, how one Apostle could preach in a province evangelised by another. St. Paul preached at Rome and at Antioch, which were subject to St. Peter; but he did not glory in those churches, as if they were committed to him; he, therefore, did not glory in another man's rule. And, further, religious who are commissioned by bishops to preach, do so in no diocese, save in that one, for which they have faculties. Thus, they do not preach to another man's flock. They are the coadjutors of the bishop, whose commission they hold.

It is easy to answer the objections to the propriety of religious hearing confessions. The decree quoted as opposed to it, only forbids religious to act as confessors on their own authority. It does not prohibit their doing so, at the bidding of the Pope, or of a bishop. This is clearly shown XVI. QUAEST. I. *Pervenit.* Neither, are religious less fit, than are secular priests, for this duty (CF. XVI. QUAEST. I. *Sunt tamen nonnulli*).

To the next objection, viz., that parish priests, as pastors of souls, ought to study the faces of their flock; which they cannot do, except by hearing their confessions, we answer, that confession is not the only means, whereby we may know whether a man be good, or bad. For, we can draw a conclusion from the judgment passed upon him by his superior. Hence, if a bishop absolve one of his flock, either by his own act, or through the agency of another commissioned by him, his parish priest ought to be as satisfied that he knows such a man, as if he himself had been his confessor. He knows that his parishioner has been

approved by the judgment of a superior, whom he himself has no right to criticise. And, further, if according to the decretal, he hear the confessions of his parishioners once a year, it gives him sufficient opportunity for knowing them.

To the objection that, everyone is bound, once in the year to confess his sins to his own priest, we reply that the expression "his own priest" applies not only to the parish priest, but to the bishop of the diocese and to the Pope, who have, in a more extended sense than parish priests, the cure of souls. The expression "his own priest" is used, not in contradistinction to the bishop, or Pope, who is the common priest, but in contradistinction to a stranger. Hence, he who has made his confession to his bishop, or to a vicegerent appointed by him, has confessed to his own priest. And further, anyone who confesses once a year to his own parish priest, and makes himself intelligible to him, is not forbidden to make his confession at other times, to any other priest who has faculty to give absolution.[1]

The objection, that, unless a priest hears a man's confession, he cannot know whether he be in a fit state to receive the Blessed Eucharist, is based upon an error. For a priest can know the state of a communicant's soul, by the judgment of the superior who has given him absolution, and whom he ought to trust as he would trust himself.

[1] According to the present discipline of the Church every priest who has received unrestricted faculties from a Bishop is regarded as "a vicegerent appointed by him." He consequently may hear the confessions of any subject of the Bishop who is free to come to him. This applies to all times of the year. The Confessor, *for the purpose of confession*, by virtue of the faculty received becomes the penitent's "own priest."—EDITOR.

The argument, that the permission to confess to a priest other than the parish priest, affords opportunity for concealment of sins, is fallacious. For, a priest ought to believe what a penitent says, whether it be for, or against, himself. Therefore, if the penitent says, that he has made his confession, it ought to be taken for granted that he is speaking the truth. Even if the parish priest were to act as his confessor, he might be deceived; for the penitent might confess his more venial offences, and conceal his grievous sins. And it must, likewise, be remembered that, though the facility for confessing to different priests may be abused, it is nevertheless, as we have already shown, a safeguard against far greater evils.

The argument, that, a monk, having no power to correct others, cannot absolve them, is only true in a very limited sense. For, though monks have not this power in an ordinary way, they are able, by the commission of a bishop, both to correct and to absolve. The Demophilus to whom Dionysius wrote the words quoted was not a priest, nor even a deacon. This is clear from the Epistle quoted by our adversaries.

The same answer must be returned to the objection, that, if religious can hear confessions anywhere, they can do so everywhere; and thus they become rulers of the Universal Church. Monks, on their own authority, can hear confessions nowhere. They can act as confessors, only where they are commissioned to do so; and if the Head of the Church give them permission to hear confessions everywhere, they can do so everywhere. This, however, does not constitute them governors of the Church; since they absolve sinners, not by their own power, but by the authority delegated to them. The Pope is not styled universal Bishop,

not because he does not possess complete and direct power over every diocese in the Church; but, because he does not rule any particular diocese, as its peculiar and special pastor. Were he to do so, the powers of the other bishops would lapse. This reason is given in the chapter quoted.

The arguments brought as proofs that religious cannot, even with episcopal permission, preach or hear confessions, are easily answered. The proposition, that what a man gives away he does not still possess, does not hold good in things spiritual. These are communicated, not like physical things, by the transference of some dominion over them, but rather by an emanation of an effect from its cause. When one man communicates knowledge to another he does not, on this account, deprive himself of this knowledge; for it remains in his power. In the same way, he that confers some power upon another, does not, by so doing, deprive himself of that power. A bishop does not, by conferring on a priest the power to consecrate the Body of the Lord, cease to be able himself to do so. St. Augustine, treating of the communication of spiritual things, says (I. *de Doctrina christiana*), "Everything that is not lessened by being imparted, is not, if it be possessed without being communicated, possessed as it ought to be possessed." In like manner, when a bishop confers upon a priest the power of absolving, he does not himself lose that power; unless the power of a priest in his parish is considered similar to that of a soldier in his town. This idea is, of course, ridiculous; for priests are not masters, but servants. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ," St. Paul writes (1 *Cor. iv.* 1). Our Lord, also, said to His Apostles, "The Kings of the Gentiles lord

it over them: but you not so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the least: and he that is the leader, as he that serveth" (*Luke xxii.* 25).

The statement, that a bishop, by committing the care of a parish to a priest, relieves himself of all responsibility connected with it, is untrue. For, a bishop is still answerable for the care of all the souls in his diocese (SEE X. QUAEST. I., CAP. *Quaecumque*). Hence, St. Paul, after speaking of all his labours, concludes by saying, "Besides those things that are without: my daily instance, the care of all the churches" (2 *Cor. xi.* 28). His burden, however, is rendered supportable to a bishop, because he has assistants of an inferior rank. But, even granted that a bishop, by committing a parish to a priest, relieves himself of its responsibility, it would not, on that account, follow, that he would abrogate his power in that parish. For, the ministers of Christ are able to labour for the salvation of the faithful, not only by freeing themselves from responsibility, but, likewise, by increasing their own merit, and producing greater fruit among souls. Thus, St. Paul undertook much work for the salvation of the elect, which he might, without any danger to his salvation, have omitted.

The argument, that a priest is subject to a bishop, just as a bishop is under an archbishop, is not quite correct. For, an archbishop has not immediate jurisdiction over an episcopal diocese, except in matters specially referred to him. Thus, an archbishop cannot summon before him, or excommunicate, one who is the subject of a bishop. A bishop, on the other hand, has immediate jurisdiction over his parochial clergy; he can cite any of them to appear before him; and he has power to excommunicate them. The reason of this

distinction is, that, as the power of a priest is imperfect compared to that of a bishop, priests are, by divine right, subject to bishops, as Dionysius proves. The subjection of a bishop to an archbishop, depends, only, on an ecclesiastical ordinance, and is limited by it. But a priest, being, by divine right, subject to a bishop, is subject to him in all things. The jurisdiction of a bishop over his priests, resembles, in kind, that of the Sovereign Pontiff over all Christendom. For the Roman Church has not been given supremacy over other churches by the decrees of any synod, but by the words of Our Lord and Saviour Himself (see IN DECRETIS, DISTINCT. XXI., CAP. *quamvis*).

To the argument, that parish priests are the bridegrooms of the churches committed to them, we answer, that, strictly speaking, the Spouse of the Church is Christ, of whom are spoken the words, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom" (*John iii.* 29). He, by His Church, begets children to bear His name. The other, so called spouses, are in reality the servants of the Bridegroom, who co-operate with him, exteriorly, in this work of spiritual generation; but who do not beget spiritual children for themselves. Although they are but ministers, they are termed spouses, because they take the place of the true Spouse. Hence, the Pope, who is the vicegerent of Christ throughout the entire Church, is called the spouse of the universal Church. In like manner a bishop is termed the spouse of his diocese, and a priest of his parish. But, at the same time, the Pope is the spouse of every diocese; and the bishop is the spouse of all parishes within his see. But, it does not follow from these words, that there is, in one church, a plurality of spouses. For, priests assist their bishop in his work; and bishops

co-operate with the Pope; he, finally, is the direct minister to Christ. Thus, Christ, the Pope, the bishops, and the priests are but the one spouse of the Church. Hence, the fact that the Pope, or the bishop, hear the confessions of the faithful of a parish, or commit this office to another, is not proof that one church possesses a plurality of spouses. True plurality would consist in the appointment of two ecclesiastics of the same rank to the same office. Hence, were there two bishops in one diocese, or two parish priests in one parish, there would be the plurality forbidden by the canons.

We must next answer the proposition, that, not even Papal permission can authorise religious to preach or to hear confessions.

The first reason on which this assertion is grounded, is, that the authority of the Roman See cannot alter anything established by the statutes of the Fathers, or institute anything contrary to these statutes. This is true with regard to those decrees, which, in the judgment of the Saints, are of divine right, *e.g.*, the articles of the faith, formulated by Councils. But those matters which the Holy Fathers have declared to be of positive right, are left to the judgment of the Pope, to be altered, or abolished, by him, according to the requirements of the times. For, the holy Fathers assembled in councils, cannot promulgate any decree save by the authorisation of the Sovereign Pontiff, without whose permission, no council is allowed even to meet. Again, if the Pope see fit to act, otherwise than in the manner established by the holy Fathers, he does not act counter to their statutes. For, although, in such a case, the words of the statutes be not obeyed, the intention of them that have drawn up the statutes (to wit the welfare of the

Church), is fulfilled. For, in matters which are of positive right, it may be impossible, at all times, and under every circumstance, to adhere to the letter of a statute; although the intention with which it was framed is respected. One statute will, necessarily, be abrogated by a subsequent one. But, the fact that certain religious, being neither bishops nor parish priests, exercise the functions of preaching, and hearing confessions, is not contrary to the statutes of the Holy Fathers, unless such religious act thus on their own initiative, unauthorised by the Pope, or by a bishop.

In answer to the second objection, the Pope, as we have already shown, does not, by giving to religious the privilege of preaching or hearing confessions, act contrary to St. Paul's admonition; for these religious do not preach to another man's people. It is not true to say, that the Pope cannot alter any Apostolic decree; for the penalties pronounced against bigamy, and against fornication among the clergy, are, by authority of the Holy See, sometimes in abeyance. The power of the Pope is limited, only, in so far, that he cannot alter the canonical scriptures of the Apostles and Prophets, which are fundamental to the faith of the Church.

To the objection, that the privileges granted by sovereigns are to be understood in the sense that they are only granted in so far as they be not prejudicial to any other, we reply, that, an injustice is done to another when something is withdrawn from him, which has been established for his gratification or advantage. Hence Ezechiel says (*xxxiv.* 2), "Woe to the shepherds of Israel that fed themselves. Should not the flocks be fed by the shepherds?" But, it is

nowise prejudicial to a parish priest, if one of his parishioners be withdrawn from his authority. In the same manner an abbot may, by the Pope, be withdrawn from the authority of a bishop, and a bishop from that of an archbishop, without injustice to either. In fact, if such a course tend to the salvation of their parishioners, far from being prejudicial, it is most beneficial to all pastors who seek the things of Christ, and not such as are their own. St. Gregory commenting on the words in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Numbers, "why hast thou emulation for me?" says: "A spiritual pastor who seeks not his own honour, but the glory of his Creator, desires to be helped in his actions by all men." A faithful preacher would wish, that, were it possible, the lips of all mankind should proclaim the truth which he, alone, is incompetent to utter.

The argument, that, when a sovereign grants to a subject permission to make a will, it is with the understanding that such a will is only to be made in an ordinary and legal manner, holds good with regard to the Pope. When the sovereign Pontiff commissions anyone to preach and hear confessions, he only allows him to do so, in a legitimate way; his preaching must be unto edification. But, if a man hold a commission from the Pope to preach, he need not, in order to preach lawfully, seek a license from any other superior. Such a course would stultify the authority of the Pope. A man who has obtained permission from his Sovereign to make a will, need not have another license from anyone else. All that is required of him is, to make his will in due form. A preacher, licensed by the Pope, requires no other authorisation. He need only observe the proper rules of preaching, such as that of using

one style in addressing the poor, and another in speaking to the rich, and such other points as are mentioned by St. Gregory in *Pastorali.*

When it is urged that a monk does not, at his ordination, receive power to exercise his priestly office, unless he be placed in charge of souls; we reply, by reminding those who make this objection, that the priesthood is instituted for two ends. Its first and principal end, is the true consecration of the Body of Christ. Power to accomplish this end, is conferred at ordination, unless there be some defect in the administration, or in the recipient of this Sacrament. The second end for which the Priesthood is instituted, is for the welfare of the mystical body of Christ, by the keys of the Church, entrusted to the priest. Power to accomplish this end, is not conferred at ordination, unless the priest ordained be placed in charge of souls, or unless this power be given him by the authority of someone who has the cure of souls. But, the power of the priesthood is never given in vain; for every priest has power to fulfil the principal purpose of his ordination. But the power of preaching is bestowed for no end, save for that of preaching. Hence, as a privilege conferred by a sovereign, cannot be useless to him on whom it is bestowed, so, when the Pope gives to any priest a commission to preach, he has power to execute such a commission. Nevertheless, the Pope by so acting, does not give to a religious the office of preaching, but rather the power to exercise such an office. For, religious do not, as we have said, make use, in preaching, of their own power; they use the power entrusted to them by another.

The words quoted from I. Quaest. *de Doctrina*, were written by Dionysius of lay monks, *i.e.*, of monks who

are neither bishops, priests, nor deacons. But, even if they be applied to all religious, the Pope, by sending monks to preach, would not be disturbing the order of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For, as we have said before, he who is of an inferior rank can exercise an office belonging to a higher grade, thus imitating the action of the celestial hierarchy. Furthermore, in the ecclesiastical hierarchy those of a lower order can be promoted to a higher rank. This cannot take place in the heavenly hierarchy. Hence Pope Innocent III., before a General council, sent some Cistercian monks to preach at Toulouse.

The last objection, brought against religious who preach, is, that it is ambition on their part, to seek permission to exercise this office. This is untrue; for, a desire to preach inspired by charity, is on the contrary praiseworthy. Isaias (vi. 8) offered himself to the Lord, saying: "Lo: here I am: send me." This function may, likewise, be meritoriously declined, out of humility. Thus Jeremias said (i. 6): "Ah, ah, ah, Lord God: behold, I cannot speak; for I am a child." This is evident from the Gloss of St. Gregory. The same view is found in VIII. QUAEST. I. CAP. *In scripturis.* We must remember, that ecclesiastical offices are accompanied both by dignity and by labour. Therefore, they may, on account of their dignity, be declined; and they may be desired, for the sake of the work. "If a man desire the office of bishop, he desires a good thing," says St. Paul (1 *Tim. iii.* 1). On these words St. Augustine says (*xix. de civitate Dei*), "The Apostle desired to explain what is meant by the episcopate; and how far it may be desired; for the name implies labour not glory" (*cf. VIII. quaest. I. qui episcopatum, also the Gloss, on the same text*). Hence, if the labours

of the episcopate be distinguished from its attendant dignity, it may laudably and without danger of ambition, be desired.[1] In like manner, a religious, who seeks from a parish priest or a bishop, permission to preach, shows, not that he is inspired by ambition, but that he is filled with the love of God and of his neighbour.

[1] St. Thomas in *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office* devotes a chapter (xix.) to the elucidation of this question.—EDITOR.

CHAPTER V

ARE RELIGIOUS BOUND TO MANUAL LABOUR?

As no sufficient reasons can be found for excluding religious from apostolic labours, their enemies try to impede their work by representing, that they are bound to labour with their hands; and that they are, thus, unable to prosecute the studies, which would fit them for preaching or hearing confessions. The malice which inspires these efforts against the labours of religious, is typified by the words of the enemies of Nehemias, who said, "Come and let us make a league together" (2 *Esdras vii.*). The Gloss has the following commentary on this passage: "As the enemies of the holy City begged Nehemias to come down to the plain, and there to form a league with them; so do heretics, and bad Catholics, desire to make friends with the faithful, not, in order that they themselves may ascend to the heights of the Catholic faith and of good works, but in order to induce those that they know to be living virtuously, to descend to sin, and to false doctrine."

Those who desire to see religious obliged to labour with their hands, adduce several arguments in support of their wishes. First they quote the words of St. Paul (1 *Thess. iv.* 11), "Work with your own hands, as we commanded you," alleging that, as religious are, above all men, bound to obey the apostolic precepts, they ought to consider manual labour as a duty. And again

we read (2 *Thess. iii.* 10), "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." The Gloss contains the following commentary on this passage: "Some persons pretend, that the Apostle, in thus speaking, was alluding, not to physical labour, such as that of agriculture or handicraft, but to spiritual works." It adds later on, "Thus they blind, both themselves and others, to the true meaning of this charitable admonition; and they not only refuse to obey it, but even to understand its meaning." Again the Gloss continues, "St. Paul would have the faithful to earn their living by bodily labour, although certain religious are specially set apart for the worship of God." Hence, according to this Apostolic precept, religious ought to work.

St. Paul, again, says (Ephes. iv. 28), "Let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good; that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need." "Not merely in order to gain a livelihood" (Gloss). Hence, religious, having no other means of assisting the poor, ought to labour with their hands. Again, the Gloss, commenting on the words in St. Luke xii., "Sell what you possess," observes: "Do not merely give food to the poor, but also sell your possessions, in order, that, despising all things for the love of Christ, you may work with your hands, either in order to live, or to have somewhat to give in alms." Therefore, religious, who abandon all their own possessions, should live, and bestow charity, by the work of their hands.

Further, as Religious make profession of perfection, they are bound to imitate the Apostolic mode of life. Now we have several proofs that the Apostles worked with their hands. For instance, St. Paul writes (1 *Cor. iv.* 12), "We labour, working with our own

hands." In the Acts of the Apostles (*xx.* 34), we read, "Such things as were needful for me, and for them that are with me, these hands have furnished." In this they may be imitated by others. "Neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing; but, in labour and in toil, we worked night and day, lest we should be chargeable to any of you" (2 *Thess. iii.* 8). Religious ought, therefore, by manual labour, to imitate the example of the Apostles.

Religious, likewise, are more bound than are secular ecclesiastics, to the performance of lowly work. Yet, in the decretals (*dist. XCIX.*), we find these words: "Let a cleric, in so far as he can do so without injury to his office, maintain himself, either by handicraft or by husbandry." Again, "let every cleric, instructed in the words of God, gain his livelihood by industry." Further, "All ecclesiastics, whose health will permit it, must study, and must acquire some handicraft." How much more, then, are religious obliged to work!

Again, in the Acts of the Apostles (*xx.* 34) we read: "Such things as were needful for me, or for them that are with me, these hands have furnished." Manual labour, therefore, is a mark, distinguishing the bishops of the flock, from wolves. Now, if religious, by preaching, exercise an episcopal office, they are, certainly, bound to work with their hands.

St. Jerome, writing to Rusticus, says: "It is the custom in the Egyptian monasteries, to receive no brother who will not work. This rule is made, not so much for the sake of self-support, as for spiritual advantage, and to prevent the mind from being employed in dangerous thoughts." For this same reason, manual labour is incumbent on religious.

Again, religious ought to be always eager to make

spiritual progress. As St. Paul expresses it, they ought to be "zealous for the better gifts" (1 Cor. xii. 31). Now, St. Augustine, in his book, *De opere monachorum*, says, that "religious who labour with their hands are preferable to those who do not work." And, in the commentary on the words (*Acts xx.*): "It is more blessed to give than to receive," the Gloss observes: "They receive the greatest glory, who, having abandoned all that they possessed, labour, in order to be able to supply the necessities of those in want." Therefore, all religious ought to endeavour to work with their hands.

St. Augustine, in the book already quoted, calls those monks who will not work, "contumacious." He adds: "Who can bear to hear those who contumaciously resist the Apostolic precept not merely excused on account of infirmity, but praised for their holiness?" Contumacy is a mortal sin; else the Church would not visit it with excommunication. Hence no religious, can, without risk of sinning mortally, exempt himself from the duty of manual labour.

Further, if religious be dispensed from work, the dispensation ought to be granted in order to give them opportunity for sacred psalmody, for prayer, for preaching, and for reading. But, it is not for these reasons, that religious are exempted from labour. Therefore, they are bound to work. St. Augustine, in his book *De opere monachorum*, proves this obligation in the following words: "How do they employ themselves who will not labour with their hands? Gladly would I know what they do? They say, that they devote themselves to psalmody, to prayer, to reading and to the Word of God." The author then

proceeds to examine each of these excuses. Speaking of prayer, he says: "One prayer from the lips of an obedient man, will be heard more speedily, than ten made by one that is scornful." He, thus, insinuates, that he that will not work with his hands, is proud, and unworthy of being listened to by God. Next, speaking of those who say that instead of labouring they are singing sacred canticles, he says: "It is easy to chant and to work at the same time." He then asks: "What is to prevent a servant of God, while employed in labour, from meditating on the law of the Lord, and singing to the name of the Most High?" Thirdly, referring to reading, he says: "Do not they who say that they devote their time to reading, find in the Scriptures, the Apostolic precept to work? How great is their perversity! These men wish to read, but will not heed what is written. They desire to prolong the time for reading what is virtuous, but they will not accomplish the good works of which they read. Who does not know, that he makes the most profit by his reading, who is the swiftest to put it into practice?" Fourthly, the saint remarks about preaching: "Although one monk may have to preach, and therefore may not have time for work, all the brethren in the monastery cannot preach. If, then, they cannot all preach, why, on the pretext of preaching, should they all leave their work? But, even supposing that they can all preach, they ought to do so in turn, both in order that some may be left to do the necessary work, and because one speaker suffices to many listeners."

It is noticeable, that, on this point, those who have once forsaken the beaten track of truth, have, in their efforts to avoid one error, fallen into a contrary mis-

take. There was, anciently, among certain monks, an erroneous idea, that manual labour was detrimental to religious perfection, because it hindered religious from casting all their care upon God and thus from fulfilling Our Lord's behest: "Be ye not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on" (*Matt. vi.* 25). But, they who hold this opinion, must, for the sake of consistency, deny that the Apostles laboured with their hands. They must interpret the words of St. Paul, "if any man will not work, neither shall he eat," as referring not to physical, but to spiritual labours. Otherwise, the Apostolic precept would be opposed to the evangelical command. St. Augustine in his book *De opere Monach.*, which was written to confute this error, (as he tells us in his book of Retractations) clearly proves, that it is contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture. On the strength of this verdict, other captious men have disseminated an error of a precisely contrary nature, teaching that religious are, unless engaged in manual labour, living in a state of damnation. The Gloss terms the upholders of this opinion, friends and supporters of Pharao, who said: "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, draw off the people from their works?" (*Exod. v.* 4). It makes the following commentary on the text: "If to-day Moses and Aaron, by whom is signified the word of a prophet or a preacher, should stir up men's hearts to leave the world and to renounce all that they possess, in order to devote themselves to the service of God, and to the study of His law and word, the friends of Pharao would immediately exclaim: 'See how men are led away, and youths persuaded to forsake work and military service, and everything useful, in order to spend their time in idleness and folly. For what is

their service to God? A pretext for idleness?' Such were the words of Pharao, and thus do his friends still speak."

In order to defend the servants of God from persecution of this nature, we shall now prove that religious are not, except perhaps occasionally, bound to manual labour; nay, that those who do not work with their hands are in a state of salvation.

In the first place, the Gloss, commenting on the words: "Behold the birds of the air" (Matt. vi. 26), says: "The saints are deservedly compared to birds; for they seek Heaven, and they are so far removed from the world, that they do no work on earth. They labour not, but, by contemplation, dwell in Heaven. Of such may it truly be said: 'Who are these that fly like clouds?'"

St. Gregory, in the second part of his second homily (*super Ezech.*), speaks thus. "He that leads a contemplative life, turns his whole mind to the love of God and of his neighbour. He ceases from external work, and is engrossed by a desire for his Creator, which leaves him capable of no other activity. He forgets all other cares, and yearns only to behold God face to face." Hence, perfectly contemplative souls withdraw themselves from exterior occupations.

Again, the Gloss thus comments on the words (Luke x.), "Lord, hast thou no care that my sister has left me alone to serve?" "Such" (says the Gloss) "are the words of those who, understanding nothing of the nature of true contemplation, consider that charity to our neighbour is the only work pleasing to God." Those who hold that religious are bound to labour with their hands, consider that this is an obligation imposed on them by brotherly love; in order, that, by their

work, they may have something to bestow in alms. They quote the words of St. Paul (*Ephes. iv.* 28), "Let him labour with his hands, that he may have something to give to him that suffereth need." They, therefore, who desire to see religious obliged to work, join in the murmur of Martha. But the Lord made excuse for the idleness of Mary.

We can prove our point by the following example. St. Benedict, as we are told by St. Gregory (in *Book II. Dial.*), lived for three years in a cave, not working with his hands, and unknown to any, save to the monk Romanus who brought him food. But, who will dare to say that he was not in a state of salvation, when the Lord spoke of him to a certain priest, saying: "My servant in such a place is dying of hunger"? Both in the Dialogue, and in the lives of the Fathers, we find many other examples of saints, who have passed their lives without working with their hands.

Manual labour is either a precept, or a counsel. If it be a counsel, no one is bound to observe it, unless obliged thereto by vow. Hence, manual labour is no duty for religious, whose rule does not prescribe it. If, on the other hand, manual labour be a precept, it is incumbent alike on seculars and on religious; since both laymen and religious, are, equally, bound to obey the Divine and Apostolic precepts. Hence, if a layman, before his entrance into religion, were free to live in the world without work, he would, on becoming a religious, be equally exempt from the necessity of labour.

At the time at which St. Paul said: "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat," religious were not distinguished from seculars; and the rule of labour was established for all Christians alike. All were

equally called brethren as we see from the words: "Withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly" (2 *Thess. iii.* 10). Again: "If any brother have a wife that believeth not," etc. (1 *Cor. vii.* 12). On these words, the Gloss interprets the word "brother" to mean any one of the faithful. If, then, on account of the admonition of St. Paul, religious be bound to manual labour, the same duty is equally incumbent upon the laity.

St. Augustine, in his book *De opere monachorum*, says: "Credit must be given to, and allowances made for, the delicate health of those, who, in the world, were able to live without working; and who, on their conversion to God, have distributed all that they had to the poor. Men of this class are not, generally, equal to physical toil." Hence we see, that those who have lived in the world without labour, are not bound when they go into religion, to work with their hands.

This point is further proved by another passage of the same book. In this, St. Augustine, speaking in praise of a certain wealthy man who had given all his goods to a monastery, says: "He has done well to set others an example by working with his own hands. For, had he been unwilling to labour, who would have dared to constrain him to do so? Neither is it of any consequence, that he gave his possessions to a monastery instead of dividing them otherwise. For, all Christians unite in one commonwealth."

When a precept is only given under certain conditions or circumstances, it is only binding in the event of such conditions or circumstances arising to necessitate its observance. St. Paul gave the command to labour, only in particular cases, as a safeguard against sin. When such sin can be otherwise avoided,

manual labour is not a duty. The only three cases in which the Apostle enjoins it are, First in Ephes. iv. 28, "He that stole, let him now steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands." Here he proposes work as a remedy against theft, to such as preferred to steal, rather than to earn their living. Secondly, he prescribes labour in 1 Thess. iv. 11, saying: "Work with your own hands, as we commanded you: and that you walk honestly towards them that are without; and that you want nothing of any man's." In this passage, labour is enjoined as a preventive against covetousness, which is theft by desire. Thirdly, St. Paul in 2 Thess. iii. 11, again enjoins labour, in these words: "For, also when we were with you, this we declared to you: that if any man will not work neither let him eat. For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling"—*i.e.*, "making a living by unjustifiable means" (Gloss). "Now, we charge them that are such, and beseech them, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that, working with silence, they would eat their own bread." In these verses, St. Paul enjoins labour on those, who, instead of working for a livelihood, procured it by illicit means. Hence, we see, that there is no duty of manual labour incumbent on either laymen, or religious, who can maintain themselves without either theft, covetousness, or dishonesty. Neither does St. Augustine say that work is a precept to be obeyed by all. If we examine his words, we shall see, that he only urges the fulfilment of the Apostolic precept. Hence, religious are only bound to manual labour under certain circumstances.

Those who do not depend upon their work for subsistence, are not obliged to labour. Otherwise, all rich

men, both seculars and ecclesiastics, who live without working, would be in a state of damnation; which is, of course, an absurd hypothesis. Now, there are some religious who have an assured livelihood, either from the alms of benefactors, or because the ministry of preaching is committed to them, and "the Lord hath ordained that they that preach the Gospel shall live by the Gospel" (1 *Cor. ix.* 14). The Gloss says that, "God has made this provision for preachers, in order that they may be the more swift to proclaim His word." Therefore, these words cannot be understood as referring only to prelates, for, though bishops have, in their own right, authority to preach; yet, it behoves, not only them, but all such as have a commission to preach, to be diligent in the exercise of this duty. Religious, as we have already proved, are included in this category. There are, likewise, certain religious, who assist in the Divine Office in the Church. They have a right to live by this means; for St. Paul says, that "they who serve the altar, partake also with the altar" (1 *Cor. ix.* 13). St. Augustine speaks thus, in his book *De opere monachorum:* "If religious be evangelists, I grant that they have a right to live on the alms of the faithful. If they minister at the altar, they can claim the same right; for it is their due, and it is not an unjust demand."

The same remarks apply to those religious who devote themselves to the study of the Holy Scripture. St. Jerome writes, in his epistle to Vigilantius: "The custom prevailed in Judæa, and is still extant in our time, that they who possessed nothing on earth, whose only portion was the Lord, and who meditated day and night on His law, were maintained by the synagogues, and by the good offices of all mankind." Hence

we see, that there is no obligation to labour incumbent on all religious.

Spiritual profit, is always to be preferred to temporal advantage. Now, they who minister to the public welfare by the preservation of temporal peace, are justly paid a stipend which enables them to live. St. Paul says (*Rom. xiii.* 6), "For, therefore, also you pay tribute. For they are the ministers of God, serving unto this purpose" ("by fighting for their country," says the Gloss). Hence, they who minister to the spiritual necessities of the state, either by preaching or expounding the Scriptures, or assisting in the public prayers of the Church, have a far better right to be supported by the contributions of the faithful. They are, therefore, not bound to manual labour.

St. Augustine observes, again, in his book *De opere monachorum*, that St. Paul worked with his hands in those places, (of which one was Corinth), in which he was accustomed to preach to the Jews only on the Sabbath day. But, when he was at Athens, and preached daily, he lived, not by his labour, but by the alms brought to him by the brethren from Macedonia. Hence, we see, that the function of preaching, is not to be set aside, for the sake of manual labour. Those men, therefore, who whether by commission from a superior, or of their own right, are able to preach daily, or otherwise to minister to souls, ought to abstain from manual work.

Further, works of mercy are preferable to physical labour. St. Paul says, (1 *Tim. iv.* 8), "For bodily exercise is profitable to little; but godliness is profitable to all things." But, even works of fraternal charity, must give place to the exercise of preaching. "It is not fit that we should leave the word of God, to

serve at tables" (*Acts vi.* 2). "Leave the dead to bury their dead; but go thou, and preach the Kingdom of God" (*Luke ix.* 60). On this passage the Gloss observes: "The Lord teaches us to forego lesser advantages, for the sake of such as are greater. It is more profitable to raise souls, by preaching, from the death of sin, than to bury dead bodies in the earth." Hence, manual labour may, lawfully, be neglected for the sake of preaching.

It is impossible, at the same time, both to gain a livelihood by work, and to carry on a systematic study of Holy Scripture. St. Gregory, expounding the words in *Exod. xxv.*, "The bars shall be always in the rings," says: "It is, beyond all things, necessary, that they who are destined for preaching, should be unremitting in their studies; so that, although they be not always preaching, they may be always prepared to preach." Hence, those, whose duty it is to preach, whether by their own authority as is the case with bishops, or by the commission of prelates, ought to set aside manual labour, for the sake of study.

There are some words in the prologue wherewith St. Jerome prefaces his commentary on the book of Job, which show, clearly, that religious are justified in neglecting bodily labour for the sake of studying Holy Writ. "Were I," says St. Jerome, "to spend my time in weaving baskets, or plaiting palm branches, in order to eat my bread in the sweat of my brow, no one would reproach me for my anxiety to supply my material wants. Now, however, that, in obedience to the admonition of Our Saviour, I labour for a meat that doth not perish, and strive to clear the sacred volume from the errors that have accumulated therein, I am reproached with having committed a double

fault." Later on he adds, "Wherefore, my brethren, I pray you to accept these spiritual and durable gifts, in lieu of fans, and baskets, and other little monastic presents." Thus, we see, that the monk St. Jerome was rebuked by envious tongues, for preferring the study of Holy Scripture to manual labour. His example may, profitably, be followed by religious, in spite of the complaints uttered against them by their detractors.

St. Augustine, further says, in his book *De opere monachorum,* "They who have renounced all their possessions, and distributed their fortune, whatsoever it may be, among the needy, and, with pious humility, desire to be enrolled among the poor of Christ, can perform a work of mercy, even greater than that of dividing their substance among those in want. For, if they be not hindered by ecclesiastical labours, and have sufficient strength to work, they will, by manual labour, set a good example to the idle." Hence we see, that religious are dispensed from the duty of bodily toil, either by infirm health, or by ecclesiastical business. Now, of all clerical duties, preaching is the noblest and most useful. "Let the priests who rule well be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (1 *Tim. v.* 17). Therefore, religious, who are engaged in preaching, ought not to be employed in bodily labour.

It only, now, remains for us to answer the arguments brought forward in favour of the contrary opinion. The first argument brought against us, is, that manual labour is an Apostolic precept. To this objection we reply, that it is a precept not of positive right, but of the natural law. This is clear from the words of St. Paul (2 *Thess. iii.* 6), "That you would withdraw

yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly," which the Gloss interprets to mean, "who walketh not according to the law of nature." The Apostle is speaking of such as will not work. Now, the very constitution of our bodies, teaches us, that nature intends us to labour. We are not provided with raiment, as other animals are furnished with hides. Neither has nature given us weapons, like the horns which she has bestowed on cattle; nor the claws wherewith lions defend themselves. Nor is any food, save milk, supplied naturally to us, as Avicenna remarks. In lieu of the gifts bestowed upon other animals, man is endowed with reason, which teaches him to supply his needs, and with hands, wherewith he can carry out the dictates of reason, as Aristotle says (*XIV. de animal.*). As the precepts of the natural law regard all men without distinction, the law of manual labour does not apply more to religious than to others. Nevertheless, it is not true, that all men are bound to work with their hands. There are certain laws of nature, which, in their observance, are of profit to none, save to him who obeys them. Such is the law obliging man to eat. These laws must be obeyed by every individual man. Other natural laws, *e.g.*, that of reproduction, regard not only the man who obeys them, but are advantageous to the whole human race. It is not necessary that all these laws should be obeyed by every individual; for no single man is competent to perform all the activities which are needed for the continuation of the human race. One individual would not suffice for the different works of reproduction, of invention, of architecture, of agriculture, or for the other functions which must be exercised for the continuance of the human race. To supply the

needs common to all mankind one individual must assist another; just as, in the body, one limb is subserved by another. It is in allusion to this mutual service which men are bound to render to each other, that St. Paul says: "Every one members, one of another" (Rom. xii. 5). The differences existing among men, and enabling them to devote themselves to different occupations, are to be attributed, primarily, to Divine Providence, and, secondarily, to natural causes, whereby certain men are disposed to the performance of certain functions, in preference to others.

Hence, we see that no man is bound to any particular work, unless necessity obliges him to it, and unless no one else will accomplish it for him. For example, if a man be constrained by necessity to dwell in a house which no one will build for him, he must build it for himself. With regard, therefore, to manual labour, I maintain, that it is not incumbent upon anyone, unless he be in want of something which must be produced by such labour, and which he cannot, without sin, procure from any other man. For we are said to be able to do anything, when we can *lawfully* do it. This appears from the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. iv. 12). "We labour, working with our own hands," "because" (comments the Gloss) "no one will supply our necessities." Hence, the Apostle does not enjoin manual labour as a precept on any, save on those who choose to gain their living by sin, rather than by work. Nor can it be proved, that anyone, be he layman or religious, is bound to manual labour, except to save himself from death by starvation, or to avoid a sinful mode of gaining a livelihood.

To the second objection, which is based on the commentary of the Gloss on the words, "If any man will

not work, neither let him eat," we answer, that this saying must be understood as referring to physical, as distinguished from spiritual work. It was directed against those who interpreted this passage as signifying spiritual labours only, and as forbidding the servants of God to work. The Gloss corrects this interpretation. St. Augustine, likewise, finds fault with it, in his book *De opere monach.* But, even if the verse, "If any man will not work neither let him eat," be understood as referring to manual labour, it does not prove that everyone who desires to eat, is bound to work with his hands. Were such a precept of labour universally imposed, it would contradict the words of St. Paul, "we worked day and night; not as if we had not power," etc. As the Apostle had power to eat without working, the words: "if any man will not work, neither let him eat," cannot be understood as implying an obligation to work imposed on all mankind. The class of men to whom St. Paul refers, becomes quite evident, from some other of his words in the same chapter (2 *Thess. iii.*): "For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling," or, as the Gloss says, "providing themselves with the necessaries of life by illicit means." St. Paul continues, "now we charge them that are such, and beseech them, that, working with silence, they would eat their own bread." For one accustomed to gain his living in an unlawful manner, ought not to eat, if he will not work. The words of the Gloss which follow, to wit, "that they may not be compelled, by want, to beg," show that labour is not to be imposed upon the servants of God as a necessity; but that it is proposed to them, as a means of avoiding the evil of compulsory mendicancy.

For it is better for a man to work with his hands, than to be reduced, against his will, to beggary. Nor does it follow that they who profess poverty, and who, out of humility, are content to beg, are bound to work with their hands.

To the third objection, we reply, that the Apostle has given no absolute precept concerning manual work. He speaks of it as being preferable to theft: "he that stole, let him now steal no more, but rather let him labour with his hands," etc. Hence, as religious can live without stealing, there is no reason why they should be bound to work.

To the fourth objection, our answer is that they who, in obedience to the counsel of Our Lord, have sold all things, ought to follow Him. Therefore Peter said: "Behold we have left all things and have followed Thee," etc. (*Matt. xix.* 27). Now, men can follow Christ, either by a life of contemplation, or by one of action. They are equally His followers who leave all things in order to devote themselves to contemplation; or in order to give material alms; or to bestow spiritual assistance by preaching or teaching. The passage, quoted from the Gloss, while it mentions one mode whereby the counsels of Our Lord are observed, does not, thereby, intend to exclude the other way; else, it would contradict the gospel. For, St. Luke (*ix.* 59) tells us, how Our Lord said to a certain man, "Follow Me." But he to whom He spoke, asked for time wherein to bury his father. Christ answered him: "Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou, and preach the Kingdom of God." Thus, it was Our Lord's will, that some men, when they had left all things, should follow Him to proclaim the word of God. We can, also, say that this text, together with

all that is contained about it in the Gloss, is a counsel. It is, therefore, binding, only, on such as are vowed to its observance.

Our answer to the fifth objection, is, that the manual labour of the Apostles, was sometimes a matter of necessity, and at other times a work of supererogation. When no one would supply the Apostles with food, they were obliged to work (cf. Gloss on 1 *Cor. iv.*). But, we see in 1 Cor. ix., that, at other times, manual labour was, for them, a matter of supererogation. Now, there are three reasons for which the Apostles chose to do work that was not a necessity. It was, first, in order to take from those false apostles, who preached only for the sake of temporal gain, the occasion of preaching: "But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off the occasion from them," etc. (2 *Cor. xi.* 12). Secondly, the Apostles, at times, resorted to manual labour, lest they to whom they preached, should, in their avarice, find it a burthen to provide for the material needs of those from whom they received spiritual benefits; and lest they should so fall away from the faith. "For what is there that you have had less than the other churches, but that I myself was not burthensome to you" (2 *Cor. xii.* 13). Thirdly, the Apostles laboured in order to set an example of industry. "We worked night and day, lest we should be chargeable to any of you" (2 *Thess. iii.* 8). But St. Paul did not work in cities, such as Athens, wherein he had facilities for preaching daily (see St. Augustine, *De opere monachorum*). Hence, it is not a matter of salvation for religious to imitate his manual labour; since all works of supererogation are not binding upon them. The other Apostles did not work with their

hands, except when they were obliged to do so, in order to obtain food.

To the sixth objection, we reply, that the decrees quoted by it, refer only to those clerics who are not sufficiently endowed with ecclesiastical revenues, or assisted by the alms of the faithful, to be able to live without working.

We reply to the seventh objection, that St. Paul gives to bishops the example of manual labour in those cases in which he himself had recourse to it; *e.g.*, when such labour would not be an obstacle to the performance of their ecclesiastical duties; or, when it would cause scandal to recent converts, were they to be asked for material assistance.

Our answer to the eighth objection, is, that manual labour, according to the authority of St. Jerome, is performed, not only to earn a livelihood; but, likewise, to repress dangerous thoughts, arising from idleness and self-indulgence. But sloth and the desires of the flesh are overcome, not only by bodily toil, but, likewise, by spiritual exercises. Hence St. Jerome writes: "Love the knowledge of the Scripture, and thou wilt not love the vices of the flesh." There is no precept enjoining manual labour, if idleness be avoided by means of spiritual exercises, and if the body be subdued by means of other austerities such as watching, fasting and the like, among which penitential practices St. Paul mentions labour, saying "in labours, in watching, in fasting" (2 *Cor. vi.*). The Gloss adds, "in manual labour," the reason being, "because the Apostle worked with his hands."

We reply to the ninth objection, that, at times, it is advisable to work with the hands, and at other times, it is better not to work in this manner. When manual

labour does not call a man away from some more useful occupation, it is very praiseworthy, as a means both of self-support, and of charity to those in need. It is especially to be counselled, in cases wherein those weak in faith, or but recently converted, would be scandalised if preachers, instead of earning their own livelihood, were to live on the alms of the faithful. It was on such occasions, (as the Gloss remarks), that St. Paul had recourse to manual labour (1 *Cor. ix.*). When, however, such labour hinders a man from engaging in more useful occupation, it is better to set it aside. This lesson is given us by the commentary of the Gloss on the words, "Leave the dead to bury their dead" (*Luke ix.*); and, also, by the example of St. Paul, who ceased to work when he had an opportunity of preaching. Manual labour is, naturally, a greater hindrance to modern preachers, than to those of the Apostolic age. For, the Apostles were taught by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost; whereas in our time, preachers must prepare themselves for their office, by constant study, as is evidenced by St. Gregory in the words already given.

To the tenth objection, we reply, that the monks whom St. Augustine condemns as contumacious, belong to the class which, according to the Apostolic precept, is bound to work, and which St. Paul says is worthy of excommunication (2 *Thess. iii.*). Men of this description refuse to work, because they prefer to live in sloth, and to get their living by illicit means. That St. Augustine clearly refers to this class of person, appears in the words wherein he assigns a reason why those who leave an agricultural life in order to enter religion, ought to employ themselves in physical labour. He says, that such men should work with

their hands, "because it is difficult to tell whether they become religious for the purpose of serving God, or, in order to escape from a toilsome and penurious condition, to a state, wherein they may be clothed and fed, living in idleness, and honoured by those who, hitherto, have despised them and set them at nought. Such men, evidently, belong to the class denounced by the Apostle as slothful, and bidden by him to work in silence and eat their own bread." St. Augustine accuses them of contumacy; chiefly, because, perverting the words of St. Paul, they maintain that it is not lawful for the servants of God to work with their hands.

Our answer to the eleventh objection, is that by the spiritual works to which this objection refers, may be understood either the spiritual exercises that are for the common good, or such as are profitable to individuals. A man may either join in the prayers and psalmody of the Divine Office, and thus perform a work destined for the public edification of the Church; or, he may, as do many laymen, occupy himself in private devotions. It is of the latter class, that St. Augustine is speaking, in the passage quoted in this objection. He is not alluding to those engaged in the public functions of the Church. This is clear from the words which follow. They can, he says, at the same time sing sacred canticles, and work with their hands, after the example of craftsmen, who tell each other stories, and listen with great attention, yet without ceasing to work. This conduct would not be permissible to such as are reciting the canonical hours. Again, reading may be, for some religious, a public duty; for they may have either to teach or to attend lectures in the schools as masters and scholars, either

religious or secular. It may, on the other hand, be a private occupation, as is the study of the Scriptures prosecuted by monks in the cloister, for their own consolation. St. Augustine recognises this distinction; and in the passage quoted as an objection, he speaks, not of monks engaged in teaching or lecturing, but of such as "say that they devote their time to reading."

In like manner, preaching may be a public duty; and it is so, for such as are bound to proclaim the Word of God to the people. At other times, it is a private exercise; as is the case, when, in a community, one of the religious gives a spiritual exhortation; or when the Fathers of the Desert used to address words of edification to the brethren who came to visit them. It is clear, that St. Augustine refers to this private mode of instruction. For he says: "Can all the religious of a monastery speak spiritual words to the brethren who come to them?" Hence, it is plain, that his words are to be applied not to preachers, but to such as speak unto edification. For, as the Gloss says (1 *Cor. ii.*), "Speaking is a private exercise; preaching a public function." They, therefore, who are employed, publicly, in the various spiritual exercises which we have mentioned, are justified in accepting the means of livelihood from the faithful to whom they minister. But those who devote themselves to such works for their private edification, to the neglect of manual labour, do certainly transgress against the Apostolic precept. They belong to the category of those whom St. Paul rebukes, and whom he bids to "work in silence," and to "eat their own bread." It is of such men that St. Augustine speaks. This is made clear by his words: "Why should we not devote a part of our time to the observance of the Apostolic precepts?"

Again he says: "One prayer from the mouth of an obedient man, will be heard more speedily, than ten that proceed from scornful lips." Once more, "how great is their perversity! They will not obey that which they read."

All these passages prove, that St. Augustine denounces only those religious who apply themselves to spiritual exercises, in such a manner as to transgress the Apostolic precept. But those only, as we have before observed, can disobey this precept, who are bound to fulfil it. They do not transgress it who neglect manual labour for the sake of public duties. Neither do *they* disobey it, who, instead of working with their hands, devote themselves to the exercise of contemplation. "For, (as has already been said), they are not impelled by sloth to escape from labour, and to lead an idle life. They are, on the contrary, filled with such an abundance of divine love, as to render them oblivious of every earthly care."

CHAPTER VI

IS IT LAWFUL FOR A RELIGIOUS TO LEAVE ALL THAT HE HAS, RESERVING FOR HIMSELF NO PROPERTY, EITHER PRIVATE OR COMMON?

THE enemies of truth are not satisfied with the many false assertions which we have hitherto employed ourselves in disproving. They proceed still further. They endeavour to overthrow the very basis of all religious life, to wit the practice of poverty established by Our Lord. They affirm that it is unlawful for religious to abandon all their possessions, in order to enter into a religious order, owning neither property nor income. The only reason, they say, which can justify such a step is the intention of doing manual work. They quote, as an authority for this assertion, the words of Prov. xxx. 8, "Give me neither beggary, nor riches; give me only the necessaries of life; lest perhaps being filled, I should be tempted to deny; or, being compelled by poverty, I should steal, and forswear the name of God." They who leave all things, and enter a religious order which is destitute of all possessions, abandon their means of subsistence, and expose themselves to beggary. This is particularly the case with those, who have not the intention of working with their hands. They, therefore, who act thus, are liable to be tempted to steal, and to abjure the name of God.

In Eccl. vii. 12, we read again, "Wisdom with riches is more profitable," *i.e.*, than wisdom alone. Hence, it is reprehensible to choose wisdom without riches, by abandoning the means of support, in order to gain wisdom. Again, we are told that, "through poverty many have sinned" (*Ecclesiast. xxvii.* 1). The Gloss interprets these words, as meaning poverty of heart, and of work. Now, if every occasion of sin is to be avoided, no man ought to reduce himself to poverty by parting with all his goods.

St. Paul gives to the Corinthians the following rule concerning almsgiving: "If the will be forward, it is accepted according to that which a man hath, not according to that which he hath not. For I mean not that others should be eased, and you burthened" (2 Cor. viii. 12). The Gloss interprets this text to mean, that a man must keep for himself the necessaries of life: and that if he bring on himself poverty, he is giving beyond his means. Hence, they that abandon all their possessions are giving alms inordinately, and in a manner contrary to the Apostolic rule.

The Gloss has the following comment on the words of St. Paul (1 Thess. v. 12), "I beseech you brethren that you know," etc.: "Riches beget carelessness about salvation. Penury, also, causes men to forsake justice, in their efforts to acquire wealth." Now, they who give up all that they possess, in order to become religious, reduce themselves to excessive poverty. They, thus, lay themselves open to a temptation to depart from justice. Again on the words of the same apostle, "but having food and wherewith to be covered" (1 *Tim. vi.* 8), the Gloss says: "Although we have brought nothing into the world, and shall take nothing out of it, temporal possessions are not to be

entirely rejected." Therefore, he who casts aside all material wealth, in order to go into religion, acts inordinately.

On the words of Jesus Christ, "he that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none" (*Luke iii.* 11), the Gloss says: "We are commanded to divide two cloaks; for if one were divided it would clothe no one. Hence, we see, that charity must be proportioned to the capability of our human condition; and that no one should render himself entirely destitute; but that he should rather divide what he has with the poor." Hence, to give away everything in alms, and to keep nothing for ourselves, is unreasonable and inordinate conduct. It is, therefore, sinful.

In St. Luke (*xii.* 29), we read, "Seek ye not what ye shall eat." The Gloss remarks hereupon, "Our Lord does not forbid us to reserve any money for our own necessities; for He Himself had a purse. But, unless such provision for ourselves were right, it would be forbidden; and Christ would have kept nothing for Himself." Hence, it must be virtuous and fitting, to retain some portion of our property, instead of renouncing the whole.

It is an act of prodigality to give away both what ought, and what ought not to be given. He who gives away everything, gives what ought not to be given, but ought to be retained. Thus he sins by prodigality.

In his epistle to the Romans (*xii.* 1), St. Paul speaks of, "your reasonable service." The Gloss says, that reasonable service consists "in the avoidance of extremes." But, to give away everything, is to give too much, and therefore it is to exceed the medium of liberality, which consists in "giving enough, and keeping enough." Hence, he who gives up everything

to go into religion, does not offer a reasonable service to God.

God has given us this commandment (*Exod. xx.* 13), "Thou shalt not kill," *i.e.*, says the Gloss, "by depriving another of the means of life, which thou dost owe him." Now, as temporal possessions are "the means of life," and, as we "owe" the means of subsistence, in the first place, to ourselves, he that deprives himself of all material possessions, sins against the commandment, "thou shalt not kill," by depriving himself of the means of living.

"It was better with them that were slain by the sword, than with them that died with hunger" (*Lam. iv.* 9). Hence, it is more iniquitous, to expose ourselves to death by starvation, than to destruction, by violence. "It is not lawful for a man to act thus, when he can, without sin, act otherwise," says St. Augustine. Much less, then, is it permitted to us to expose ourselves to starvation, by parting with all that we possess, and retaining nothing.

Again, a man is more bound to preserve his own life, than to care for another. Now, it would be sinful to deprive another man of all means of subsistence, and thus to cause him to perish. "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor: he that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood" (*Eccles. xxxiv.* 25). Therefore, he that gives away his all, and retires into a religious order which has no common property, sins by suicide.

The life of Christ is the example of perfection. But, we read that Our Lord had a purse (*John vii.*); and again, that His disciples went into a city to buy bread (*John iv.*). Hence, the entire renunciation of all property cannot be perfect.

Further, the observances of the religious orders

originated in the Apostolic mode of life. For, as St. Jerome says in his book *De illustribus viris*, all Christians of the primitive Church resembled the most perfect religious of our day. We are informed of the same fact by the book "In collationibus Patrum," and also by the Gloss on the words (*Acts iv.*), "the multitude of them that believed." But this same chapter of the Acts also states, that in the Apostolic times, the faithful had all things in common, and that there was no one needy among them. They, therefore, who relinquish their possessions, and, having no common property, are bound to be destitute, lead, not a religious, but a superstitious life.

When Our Lord sent His disciples to preach, He gave them two commands. He bade them, first, to take nothing with them on the way (*Matt. x.*, *Mark vi.*, *Luke ix.*). Secondly, He told them not to go into the way of the Gentiles (*Matt. x.*). When the time of His Passion was at hand, He rescinded His first command, saying, "But now he that hath a purse let him take it and also a scrip" (*Luke xxii.* 36). He would seem, likewise, to have revoked His second command in the words, "Going therefore, teach ye all nations" (*Matt. xxviii.* 19), and "going into the whole world," etc. (*Mark xvi.* 15). Since the second order has been rescinded, it need no longer be observed; but, on the contrary, the Gospel must be preached to the Gentiles. In the same way, the first of these two precepts is not now to be put in practice. Therefore, men need not entirely deprive themselves of the means of subsistence.

In *XII. quaest. I.* we read: "It is right to possess the property belonging to the Church, and to despise our own possessions." And again: "It is manifest, that, while for the sake of perfection, men ought to re-

nounce what belongs to them, they may, without any imperfection, possess the property of the Church, which belongs to all." Therefore, it stands to reason, that, if any man abandon his own possessions to go into religion, he ought to choose an order holding some common property. Again, in the same question, *cap. Videntes*, it is laid down, that "the Sovereign Pontiffs have ordained that property should be conferred on the Church, in order that there should be no destitution among those leading a common life." Hence, those who despise common property, and prefer to live in want, sin, by acting counter to the ordinances of the Holy Fathers.

The Gloss, on the words: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down" (*Matt. iv.*), has the following commentary: "No one ought to tempt God, when human reason teaches him how to act." And again, "A man, when his human reason is at a loss, ought to commend himself to God; not tempting Him, but devoutly confessing to Him." Now, he who has the means of procuring the necessaries of life, to wit food and clothing, is taught, by human reason, how to act. If, then, he refuse to make use of these means, and yet expects his life to be preserved, he sins by tempting God; as much as a man would sin, who, seeing a bear approach him, should throw down his weapon of self-defence, and yet expect God to save him.

Again, we ought not to reject that which we daily pray for. Now, each day we beg of God to supply our bodily wants, saying, "Give us this day our daily bread." Therefore, we ought not to expose ourselves to poverty, by casting aside all our temporal possessions. We read in DECR. DE CONSECR. *dist. I. cap.* NEMO. that, "a church ought not to be built, before he that

desires to build it, has provided a sum sufficient for the maintenance of the priest who is to take charge of such a church." They, therefore, who possess no property, live in opposition to the statutes of the Holy Fathers.

The mode of religious life wherein common property is enjoyed, is approved by the ancient Fathers, Sts. Augustine, Basil, Benedict, and many others. It appears rash, therefore, to introduce another form of religious life.

In the New Testament Our Lord enjoins His followers to assist the poor in their necessities. But this precept cannot be carried out by those who have neither private, nor common property. Therefore, entire renunciation of all possessions is not praiseworthy.

As things may at times be best understood by tracing them to their source, we will now examine the origin of these propositions; and we will investigate the mode of their development. In the early days of Christianity there flourished at Rome, a heretic, confuted in the writings of St. Jerome, whose name was Jovinian. He taught, that all who preserved their baptismal innocence, would receive, in Heaven, an equal reward. He, further, taught, that virgins, married persons, and widows were, if baptised, all of equal merit in the sight of God, provided that there was no discrepancy between them with regard to their works. He said, that, as there is no difference between abstinence from food and eating with giving of thanks, so there is no inequality between virginity and marriage. By this teaching, he, of course, stultified, both the counsel given by Our Lord as to celibacy in His words, "Not all men take this word," *i.e.*, remain single, "but they to whom it is given" (*Matt. xix.* 2),

and the advice of St. Paul on the same subject, "concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give counsel" (1 *Cor. vii.* 25). The opinions of Jovinian have, St. Augustine tells us, been condemned as heretical.

The errors of Jovinian, were, however, revived by Vigilantius, who impugned the faith, hated continence, and, in the midst of riotous feasting, declaimed against the fasting practised by holy men (see St. Jerome's epistle *Contra Vigilantium*). But, Vigilantius was not contented with imitating Jovinian in rejecting the counsel of virginity; he proceeded, further, to condemn the practice of poverty. St. Jerome, speaking of the errors of Vigilantius, says: "He maintains that it is better to distribute our goods among the poor by degrees, than to sell them altogether, and give away the price. Let him accept his answer not from me, but from God, who has said, "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast," etc. (*Matt. xix.*). The error of Vigilantius has been handed down, by a succession of heretical teachers, to our days. It is still perpetuated by the sect of the Cathari,[1] and is expounded in a treatise, written by a certain heresiarch of Lombardy named Desiderius, who, amongst other heretical propositions, condemns the conduct of those who sell all, that they may live in poverty with Christ.

More recently, however, the old heresies concerning virginity and poverty, have been revived by certain men who, while pretending to defend the truth, have gone from bad to worse; and, who, not content with teaching, like Jovinian, that a condition of wealth is

[1] A name given to the heretics who professed the Gnostic, Manichaean, and cognate errors. The precursors of the Albigences are sometimes called *Cathari*.—EDITOR.

as meritorious as voluntary poverty, or with preferring riches to poverty, as did Vigilantius, hold, that poverty is to be absolutely condemned; and that it is not lawful for a man to leave all things for Christ, unless he enter an Order which possesses some common property, or can support itself by means of manual labour. They further assert, that the poverty commended by the Scriptures, is not that actual poverty, whereby a man strips himself of all temporal possessions, but that habitual poverty, which causes him to despise those earthly goods which he actually owns. We will now proceed to refute this mistaken opinion.

(1st) We will prove that for evangelical perfection, not only habitual poverty is required, but, likewise, that actual poverty which consists in the renunciation of material possessions.

(2nd) We shall show, that perfection is attained, even by those who own no common property.

(3rd) We shall make it evident, that manual labour is not essential to perfection, even where men possess nothing.

(4th) We shall refute the arguments whereby our adversaries seek to maintain their errors.

1. In order to prove that evangelical poverty requires, not only habitual, but, likewise, actual poverty, we will remind our readers of the words: "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all," etc. (*Matt xix.* 21). Now, he who sells all that he has, and distributes it to the poor, practises, not merely habitual, but, likewise, actual poverty. Hence, actual poverty is needed for evangelical perfection. Again, evangelical perfection consists in the imitation of Christ, who was poor, not only in desire, but in fact. The Gloss, on the words, "Go to the sea" (*Matt. xvii.*), says, "So

great was the poverty of the Lord, that he had not wherewith to pay the tribute money." Again, on the words, "the foxes have holes," etc. (*Luke ix.*), the Gloss says: "Our Lord meant to say, that His poverty was so extreme, that He had no shelter, and no roof to call His own." We might adduce many other proofs, that actual poverty pertains to evangelical perfection.

The Apostles were mirrors of evangelical perfection. They practised actual poverty, renouncing all that they possessed. "Behold" (said St. Peter) "we have left all things" (Matt. xix. 27). Hence, St. Jerome writes to Hebidia: "Wouldst thou be perfect, and attain to the highest dignity? Do, as did the Apostles. Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and follow Our Saviour. Do thou, alone, and stripped of all things, follow only the Cross in its bare poverty." Hence, actual poverty forms part of evangelical perfection.

The Gloss on the words "How hardly shall they that have riches," etc. (*Mark x.* 23), has the following comment: "It is one thing to have money; another to love it. Many possess it without loving it; many love it without possessing it." Thus, while some men own wealth and love it; others congratulate themselves on neither owning nor loving it, for this is the safer course. Such men can say with the Apostle, "the world is crucified to me, and I to the world." Hence, it is evident that habitual poverty, when in conjunction with actual poverty, is preferable to habitual poverty alone. This same remark may be made with reference to the words in Matt. xix. 23, "How hardly shall a rich man enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The Gloss here observes, "it is safest neither to possess, nor to love riches." "Hath not God chosen the poor in this world?" asks St. James (*ii.* 5). "Those who are poor

in temporal possessions," is the interpretation of these words given by the Gloss. Hence, it is those who are actually poor, who are chosen by God.

The Gloss on the words, "every one of you that doth not renounce everything that he possesseth," observes, that, "there is a difference between renouncing everything, and leaving everything. All who make lawful use of their material possessions renounce them, in so far as their aspirations tend towards such things as are eternal. But, they who leave all things, act with greater perfection; for they set aside that which is temporal, in order to seek only that which is eternal." Hence, abandonment of all things by actual poverty, is a point of evangelical perfection; renunciation of all things by habitual poverty, is necessary for salvation.

St. Jerome, in his epistle against Vigilantius, says: "The Lord speaks to him who desires to be perfect, and, with the Apostle leaves father, ship, and net. He whom thou praisest is in the second, or third rank; for he desires only to give the income of his possessions to the poor. We accept such an one; though we know that the first degree of virtue is preferable to the second, or third degree." From these words, it is plain, that, they who give all that they possess to the poor, are to be preferred before such as give alms only of their income.

St. Jerome, again, says, in his epistle to the Monk Rusticus: "If thou hast possessions, sell them and give to the poor. If thou hast them not, thou art free from a great burthen. Therefore, being stripped of all things, do thou follow Christ in His poverty. This is a hard and painful undertaking; but it is rewarded with a glorious recompense." For the sake of brevity, we omit many other passages from St.

Jerome, all of which must be understood as referring to actual poverty.

St. Augustine (Gennadius), likewise, says in his book *De eccles. Dogmatibus:* "Though it be a good thing to distribute our riches, by degrees, among the poor; it is a better to give all away at once, with the intention of following Our Lord and in order that, free from anxiety, we may share His poverty."

St. Ambrose, in like manner, says in his book, *De Offic.:* "Riches will not give us the slightest assistance in attaining to a life of blessedness. This is clearly pointed out by Our Lord's words, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God." And, again, he says that, "poverty, hunger, pain, and such-like evils, that are borne as evils, are not merely no obstacle to blessedness; but they are clearly pronounced to be aids towards attaining to it." Now, these words cannot be understood as referring to habitual poverty, whereby a man is merely detached from riches; for, riches have never been held by any to be obstacles to happiness. They must, therefore, be understood to refer to actual poverty, whereby all possessions are given up.

St. Gregory says (in the eighth homily of the second part on Ezech.), "When a man consecrates to God one thing, but not another, he offers a sacrifice. But, when he gives to God his whole life, with all that he has, and all that he loves, he offers a holocaust, which is the most acceptable form of sacrifice." Hence, it is the most perfect work to abandon all that we have, for the love of God. St. Gregory, likewise, says, (in prolog. Moral.), "Whilst I was still constrained to serve the world in appearance, many temporal anxieties rose up around me, and claimed all my attention. At

length, escaping from them, I sought the gate of the monastery; and, forsaking the things of this world, which I then regarded as vanities, I escaped from them, as a mariner from a shipwreck." Hence, we see, that it is dangerous to possess material goods; for they occupy the mind to a perilous degree. It is better, therefore, to relinquish the possession of earthly things by actual poverty; that, so, the mind may be freed from solicitude concerning them.

St. Chrysostom asks in his book *Quod nemo laeditur nisi a se ipso*, "What harm did material poverty do to the Apostles? Did they not live in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness? and were they not, on this account, more renowned and glorious? and did not their poverty increase their trust in God?" Hence, we see, that actual poverty, which consists in privation of all things, forms part of Apostolical perfection.

St. Bernard writes to the Archbishop of Sens: "Blessed is he that keeps for himself nothing of what he possesses. Blessed is he who has not a den like the wolves, nor a nest like the birds, nor a purse like Judas, nor a house; but who, like Mary, finds no room even in an inn, and thus imitates Him who had not whereon to lay His head." Entire destitution of all earthly possessions, pertains, therefore, to Christian perfection.

In I. QUAEST. II. CAP. *Si quis*, we read: "He that strips himself of everything, or, who, possessing nothing, desires nothing, is more perfect than he, who, out of his abundance gives something to the Church." These words are another proof that actual poverty, is a point of Christian perfection.

They who devote themselves to the contemplation of divine things, ought to be more disengaged from tem-

poral anxiety, than they who apply themselves to the study of philosophy. But philosophers, in order to be able to give their whole attention to study, were wont to relinquish all their worldly possessions. St. Jerome says to the priest Paulinus (*de instil. monach.*), "Socrates, the Theban, a very wealthy man, when he went to study philosophy at Athens, cast away a large quantity of gold, judging that he could not, at the same time, possess both virtue and riches." It is far more praiseworthy, then, to relinquish all worldly goods, for the sake of divine contemplation. The interlinear Gloss on the words, "if thou wilt be perfect," etc. (Matt. xix.), says: "Behold the life of contemplation taught by the Gospel."

A great reward is only given for great merit. Now a great reward, *i.e.* judicial power, is due to actual poverty. This appears from the words of Our Lord (Matt. xix.), "You who have left all things," etc. The Gloss commenting on this text says, "They who have left all things and have followed the Lord, shall be judges; but they who have lawfully retained and used their goods, shall be judged." Therefore, the higher merit is due to actual poverty.

St. Paul (1 Cor. vii.) in counselling virginity, gives as the reason of his counsel, that they may be without solicitude. The renunciation of riches frees a man from solicitude. For riches engender many anxieties in their possessors. Hence Our Lord (Luke x.) speaks of them as "thorns" which, by their care, choke the Word of God in the hearts of the hearers. Therefore, even as virginity, so poverty belongs to evangelical perfection.

2. We shall prove, in conclusion, that the perfection which consists in the entire sacrifice of private pro-

perty, does not necessitate the possession of common property.

The foundation of all perfection was laid by Christ, and by the Apostles. We do not, however, read that, when they left all that they had, they possessed property in common. On the contrary, we are told that they had no house wherein to dwell. Hence, common property is not an essential of perfect poverty.

St. Augustine tells us (3 *lib. De doctrina Christ.*), that in the primitive church, the Jews converted to Christianity, "being constantly in close contact with spiritual things, were so receptive of the influence of the Holy Spirit, that they sold all that they had, and laid the price at the feet of the Apostles, to be distributed among the poor." He, further, observes, that, "this fact is not narrated of any Gentile church; for they who had for gods idols made by hands, were not so open to the Holy Spirit." Hence, we see, that St. Augustine considers the perfection of the early Jewish church, to have been superior to that of the Gentile churches. For, while the Gentile converts sold all that they had to give to the poor, the Jews sold their possessions so absolutely, as to reserve to themselves no common property whatsoever. Hence, poverty, without common property, is more perfect, than that which retains property in common.

St. Jerome, writing to Heliodorus, on the death of Nepotian, says in derision: "Men are richer as monks than they were as seculars. With the poverty of Christ, they possess wealth that they had not when they were subject to the devil; and the Church mourns over the riches of those, whom the world despised as beggars." These words may often be verified in re-

ligious orders that maintain common property. They can never be true of such religious as possess nothing. Hence, it is more meritorious for religious to have nothing, than to possess property. St. Jerome, again, writes to Lucinus Beticus: "As long as we are engaged in things of the world, and our mind is occupied about our possessions and revenues, we cannot think freely of God." Hence, it is better for religious to be without property and revenues, than to possess them.

St. Gregory (*3 lib. Dialog.*) says, speaking of Isaac a servant of God, "When, as frequently happened, his disciples pressed him to accept, for the use of the monastery, the things that were offered to him, Isaac, vigilant in his care for poverty, was wont to make use of these strong words: 'The monk who seeks possessions on earth, is no monk.' For he feared to lose his poverty as a miser fears to be robbed of his gold." This example proves, that it is safest, for religious not to possess common property.

The monks of Egypt, of whom we read in the lives of the Fathers, deemed those religious to be the most perfect, who lived in the desert, possessing nothing. Hence, common property is not an essential of evangelical poverty.

Religious can be deprived of common property by tyrants. If, then, men are not to leave all that they possess, unless they go into an Order holding property in common, tyrants would have it in their power to hinder the practice of evangelical poverty. This idea is, of course, an absurd one.

The intention of our Lord in giving the counsel of poverty, was, to enable men to disengage their minds from anxiety about temporal things. Now, common property cannot be possessed without much solicitude

concerning its preservation and improvement. Hence, they who possess no common property, practise the counsel of poverty in the most perfect manner.

3. We shall finally show that actual poverty does not necessarily involve manual labour. St. Augustine says, (in his book *De opere monach.*): "They, who, in the world, possessed the means of living without work, and who, on their conversion to God, have parted with all that they had, should not be forced to labour with their hands. It is praiseworthy in them, to embrace voluntary poverty for the love of Christ, even if they possess no common property." In the primitive church of Jerusalem, there were, as we know by the testimony of St. Augustine, many men of this description. Hence, those who embrace voluntary poverty, are not bound to manual labour, even though they possess no common property.

No one is bound, by precept, to work with his hands, unless he can by no other lawful means procure a livelihood. Manual labour is not, therefore, a duty for those who possess nothing, unless they be obliged thereto by vow. Hence, it is not true, that they are bound absolutely to manual labour. They are only obliged to perform it, when it is their only means of subsistence; and, in such a case, everyone would be obliged to work with his hands, even if no vow imposed such labour on him as a duty.

The counsel of poverty was given by Our Lord, in order to facilitate contemplation. This is pointed out by the Gloss on the words of Matt. xix., "If thou wilt be perfect." "Behold," says the Gloss, "the contemplative life ordained by the Gospel." They, however, who are forced to gain their livelihood by the work of their hands, are greatly distracted from contempla-

tion. If, then, those, who, for the love of Christ, choose a life of poverty, be bound to manual labour, the very purpose for which the counsel of poverty was given will be frustrated. The counsel, therefore, will have been given to no purpose. This line of argument is, of course, absurd.

If they who leave all things for the love of Christ, be bound to have the intention of working with their hands, they must form this intention for one of the three following reasons. They must intend to perform manual labour either for its own sake; or to provide means of subsistence; or in order to procure money which can be given in alms. Now, it is absurd to say, that the spiritual perfection of poverty can consist in manual labour undertaken for its own sake. For, were such the case the work of the body, would be preferred before the perfection of the soul. Again, it is not reasonable to say that a man ought to leave all things, with the intention of going to earn his own living. For, if he had stayed in the world he could have lived by the possessions, which he has forsaken; and, further, the manual labour of the poor of Christ, who devote themselves to prayer and other spiritual exercises, barely suffices to maintain them. They must therefore, as St. Augustine says in his book *De opere monach.*, be assisted by the faithful. Thirdly, it cannot be maintained, that manual labour ought to be undertaken in order to procure means for alms-giving. For, they who enter religion, could have given much more abundantly to the poor, of the goods which they possessed in the world. Thus, they would act unreasonably in leaving all things, in order to do manual work for the sake of giving alms. They, therefore, who, having left all things enter a religious order which

has no common property, are not, as we have already shown, bound to have the intention of performing manual labour.

4. It only remains for us now to reply to the objections of our opponents.

(1.) With regard to the text from the Book of Proverbs concerning "beggary and riches," we answer, that, as there is no evil in riches themselves, but in the abuse of them, so beggary or poverty is not, in itself, an evil. The only evil of poverty is its abuse, when there is impatience or reluctance in bearing the suffering resulting from it, or when there arises a covetous desire of the goods of others. "They that will become rich fall into temptation and into the snare of the devil" (1 *Tim. vi.* 9). St. Chrysostom, likewise, says, on St. Matthew, "Hearken ye who are poor, and still more carefully ye who desire to be rich. It is not a bad thing to be poor; the real evil is to be unwilling to be poor." It is, therefore, evident that poverty which is a necessity, is accompanied by certain dangers, from which voluntary poverty is free. For, they who become poor by their own act, do not desire to be rich. Hence, the prayer of Solomon concerning beggary and riches, refers to involuntary poverty. This is clear from the context, "being compelled by poverty," etc. The Gloss, likewise, says on this text of Proverbs, "The man who walks with God, prays that he may not, either through abundance or scarcity of material goods, fall into forgetfulness of such as are eternal." Hence, we see, that Solomon teaches us, that it is not poverty or riches themselves which are to be avoided, but the misuse of either of these conditions.

(2.) The words of Solomon, "wisdom with riches is more profitable," etc., must be explained according to

the rule laid down by Aristotle (I. *Ethic*), viz., that "the greatest good, such as happiness, joined to a lesser good is preferable to that lesser good." Hence, wisdom, which is amongst the greatest goods, is preferable to riches, which are an inferior good. But, according to this rule, the greatest good joined to another very great good, is of more worth, than if it be joined to a lesser good, or if it be considered by itself. Hence, wisdom joined to evangelical perfection, which consists in poverty, and is one of the greatest goods, is worth more than wisdom, considered by itself, or joined to riches.

(3.) The words, "through poverty many have sinned," refers to compulsory poverty, which is, necessarily, accompanied by a desire for riches. We see this by the context, "he that seeketh to be enriched, turneth away his eye." As the Gloss explains: "he turns away the eye of his soul from the fear of the Lord."

(4.) The passage of the Gloss, quoted as a fourth objection, is mutilated, and misinterpreted. This becomes clear, if we subjoin its context, "He does not say that it is not better to give everything; but, out of consideration to those who are weak in virtue, he recommends them to give, in such a manner, that they shall not suffer want."

(5.) The warning, that "poverty diminishes friendship," is to be understood of involuntary poverty, which causes covetousness. This is plain by the words that follow, "while he seeketh to be filled." Satiety implies that superabundance, which they desire who are not satisfied with a little, nor are of the number of those of whom St. Paul says (1 *Tim. vi.* 8), "having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content." He gives the following reason for this content-

ment with a little, "They that will become rich, fall into temptation and the snare of the devil"; for, the desire of great wealth often causes men to fall away from justice.

(6.) The words of the Gloss, that, "temporal possessions are not to be entirely rejected," are to be interpreted to mean, that we are to use our temporal means to procure food and clothing. This appears clearly from St. Paul's words, "having food, and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content." The Gloss does not mean, that man can ignore all provision for temporal needs.

(7.) To the seventh objection, we reply, that, some temporal things, such as food and clothing, are absolutely necessary for the support of life. If I have more of such things than I need, I ought to assist the destitute; but I ought not to deprive myself of necessary food or raiment. It is of such things as are required for our present needs, that the Gloss speaks, in the passage quoted in the seventh objection. But there are temporal things, such as money and property, which, though not needed at present, may, in the future, be necessary to our support. There is no reason why perfect men should not distribute these things to the poor; for, before they are needed, God may supply the lack of them in some other way; and we are commanded in the Scriptures to trust that He will do so.

(8.) To the eighth objection, we reply, that, although it be not a matter of precept to reserve money for our necessities, it is, nevertheless, a matter of counsel. Our Lord carried a purse, not because He was unable otherwise to supply His needs, but for the sake of His weaker members, and in order that they might under-

stand, that it was lawful for them to do what they saw done by Christ. Hence the Gloss, on the words "having the purse" (*John xii.*), says: "He to whom the angels ministered, carried a purse out of condescension to our weakness, and for the assistance of the poor." Again, on the verse in Psalm ciii., "bringing forth grass for cattle," the Gloss says: "The Lord had a purse, for the use of them that were with Him; and because, in His own person, He carried the infirmity of the weak, as when He said: My soul is sorrowful." He was followed by pious women, who ministered to Him of their substance. For He foresaw that, in the future, many of His followers would be weak, and would seek material assistance. He did not fill His purse with His own property, but with alms given Him by devout and faithful men.

(9.) Our answer to the ninth objection, is the rule laid down in II. *Ethic*, viz., that, "the medium in virtue does not signify the distance from extremes, but the due proportion of circumstances, ordered by well balanced reason." Hence, the medium of virtue does not consist in preserving the right balance between superfluity and scarcity, in any circumstance considered in itself, but in a circumstance considered in comparison with other circumstances. Thus, the medium of virtue may vary according to the variability of circumstances. In sobriety, for instance, the circumstance *who* is varied according to the variety of the circumstance *what*. An amount of food which would be a moderate quantity for one person, would be too much for another, and too little for a third. Thus, again, some virtue, such as magnanimity, existing in its highest degree, may be moderate, in proportion to some other circumstance. "The magnanimous man," says Aristotle (IV. *Ethic*),

"confers the greatest dignity on himself." He who exceeds the virtue of magnanimity by superfluity, does not thereby acquire greater dignity, but oversteps the limits of virtue; and, those things which were moderation in him as a magnanimous man, are now superfluous. Hence, we see, that the medium of virtue is not destroyed, because one circumstance is in its highest degree, so long as that circumstance be proportioned to other circumstances. Thus, in a case of liberality, if we consider the quantity to be given, and if we attend only to the circumstance that in certain cases it is superfluous to give everything, we shall find the vice of prodigality. On the other hand, with a certain change of circumstances, this prodigality will become perfect liberality. For instance, if a man give all that he possesses to save his country from danger, he will be an example of perfect liberality. In the same way, he who gives away all that he has, in order to fulfil the counsel of Our Lord, acts, not with prodigality, but with perfect virtue. If, however, such a man were to spend his all upon some unfitting object, or with some unseemly circumstances, he would be prodigal. We may say the same of virginity, and of all other virtues, wherein there appears to be excess when the common mean of virtue is overstepped. Hence we see, that to give everything for the love of Christ, means, not to give both what ought and ought not to be given, but to give only that which ought to be given. For, although all things are not, in every case, to be given; yet all things are to be given up for Christ.

(10.) Our reply to the tenth objection, is, that grace is the perfection of nature. Therefore, it cannot be its destruction. There are certain things, such as food and sleep, which pertain immediately to the preserva-

tion of nature. In connection with these things, virtue does not exceed the limits of the preservation of nature. Hence, if anyone deprive himself of that which nature demands for its support, it is a vicious and unreasonable act. It is such conduct that is rebuked, both by St. Paul, and by the Gloss. The Gloss says: "Let the service which you offer, by the maceration of the flesh, be reasonable, *i.e.* tempered by discretion, and not excessive. Chastise your body with moderation, so that it be not destroyed." But nature can be preserved without luxury. Hence, if a man abstain from sensual pleasure, he is not performing a superfluous act, unless, by such abstention, he should fall into sin. For this reason, virginity is praiseworthy. Again, life can be preserved without material possessions, if we trust that Divine Providence will assist us in many ways. Hence, a man does nothing superfluous, in giving up for Christ, all that he possesses, consequently, voluntary poverty, practised for the love of Christ, is no departure from the medium which ought to be observed in virtue.

(11.) To the next objection, we reply, that, although he who leaves all things for the love of Christ, does, to a certain extent, deprive himself of the means of existence; yet, he can always count on the assistance of Divine Providence, which will never fail him; he can, also, reckon on the charity of the faithful. St. Augustine, in his book, *On Almsdeeds*, thus expresses himself on this subject: "Thinkest thou that anything will be lacking to a Christian, to a servant of God, to one devoted to good works, and to one precious in the sight of his Master? Shall he who feeds Christ, not likewise be fed by Him? Shall earthly things be wanting to him, on whom divine and heavenly gifts are bestowed? Whence spring such

unbelief, and such impious and sacrilegious ideas? How comes it, then, any is found in the house of God with so little confidence in Him? Does he who does not trust Christ, absolutely deserve to be called a Christian? Nay, rather, should such an one be named a Pharisee. For, as we read in the Gospel, the Pharisees, hearing Our Lord teach the duty of giving alms and of making to ourselves friends of earthly goods, derided Him in their avarice. And even now, we behold in the Church, men who resemble the Pharisees; whose ears are closed, and whose eyes are blinded, so that they can perceive no ray of the light of spiritual and salutary teaching. We have no reason, then, to wonder that such men hold the servants of God in contempt, when we know, that the Lord Himself, was despised." These words point out, clearly, that it is sacrilegious to say, that they who abandon all things for the love of Christ, expose themselves to the risk of suicide.

(12.) Our answer to the twelfth objection, is, that he who leaves all things for God, does not incur any danger of dying of hunger. For, Divine Providence will never abandon him, "I will not leave thee, neither will I forsake thee" (*Hebr. xiii.*). The Gloss thus comments on these words: "But in case any should say: 'what are we to do if necessary help should fail us?' the consoling words from the book of Josue are added, 'I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.' A man who should die of hunger would certainly be forsaken; but, as this will never happen, let no one be covetous. For God speaks these words to every man that trusts in Him, as well as to Josue." He makes this promise to us, on condition that we place our trust in Him. His words are spoken, not

to the avaricious, nor to the covetous, but to such as trust in God. It is not true to say, that, it is not lawful for a man to expose himself to danger; for, a man may meritoriously expose himself to death for the Name of Christ, even if it be possible for him to act otherwise. Thus, we read of many martyrs, who, in the time of persecution, offered themselves to death, by confessing their faith. If it were unlawful to expose oneself to peril, soldiers would not be justified in crossing the sea, and incurring risks for the glory of God.

(13.) To the thirteenth objection, we reply, that a man is a master of his own, not of his neighbour's property. He, therefore, injures another, if he deprives him of what belongs to him; but he does no injury to himself, by sacrificing his own possessions. Hence Aristotle says, (*Ethic v.*), that, "a man cannot, strictly speaking, commit an injustice against himself." Furthermore, he who deprives his neighbour of what belongs to him, reduces him to involuntary poverty, which is dangerous. He who abandons his own possessions, accepts voluntary poverty which, if it be embraced for the love of God, is meritorious.

(14.) Our answer to the next objection is that Our Lord reserved a certain sum of money for necessary uses, out of condescension to the weak; just as, out of condescension to human infirmity, he willed to eat, and to drink wine, with the Pharisees. It must not, then, be reputed as superstition in the holy fathers in the desert, if they refuse to keep money for their own use; or, if they choose to abstain from wine, or from delicate fare. The money which Our Lord reserved, was not His own private property; it had been given Him as alms. For, we are told, (*Luke viii.*), that,

"certain women . . . ministered unto Him of their substance."

(15.) To the fifteenth objection, we, likewise, reply, that, although the Apostles reserved certain sums for themselves, and to distribute among those holy men who had made themselves poor for Christ, that money was not their own, but was given them by the faithful in charity. When we are told that there was none needy among them, we are not to conclude, that the Apostles and Christians of the early Church did not endure much poverty for the love of Christ. For, St. Paul says, (1 *Cor. iv.* 11), "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst." And again (2 *Cor. vi.* 4), "in much patience, in tribulations, in necessities," or as the Gloss says, "want of food and clothing." We must understand by these texts, that the Apostles, in so far as they were able, supplied the poorer members of the community with such things as were needful to them.

(16.) To the sixteenth objection we reply, that, the prohibition given by Our Lord to His disciples, "not to go into the way of the Gentiles," was absolutely rescinded by Him after the resurrection; because it then became necessary for the Jews to preach the word of God to the Gentiles (*Acts xiii.*). But Christ did not, at the last supper, absolutely revoke His precept to the disciples to take nothing with them on the way. He only gave them a different order, which was to be obeyed during the time of persecution, when they would not have been able to procure the necessaries of life. Hence the Gloss says on the text of St. Luke, (*xxii.* 35), "When I sent you," etc.: "The Apostles are not bidden to observe the same rule in time of persecution, as in time of peace. For, when they were

sent to preach, Our Lord bade them take nothing with them; for it was His will that they that preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. But, when His death was imminent, and the hour drew nigh when both the pastors and the flock should be exposed to persecution, He instituted a rule befitting the circumstances; and so permitted His disciples to carry with them the means of sustenance, till such time as the fury of their persecutors should have abated, and a fitting season for preaching the Gospel should have arrived." "Thus," the Gloss continues, "does Christ teach us, that, under certain circumstances, we are justified in relaxing the rigour of our rule." We may, for example, when preaching in a hostile country, carry with us larger supplies than we should have at home. But the heretics who make the objection which it is our duty to combat, do not accept the Gloss. We shall, therefore, show by the text of the Scriptures, that when the faithful increased in number, the disciples of Christ did not carry with them the means of support. We read (*John iii.* 1), "Dearly beloved, thou dost faithfully whatever thou dost for the brethren, and that for strangers." Again, "Because, for His name, they went out, taking nothing of the Gentiles; we therefore ought to receive such." Now, if the Apostles had carried supplies with them, it would not have been necessary for them to have been assisted by the faithful, even though the Gentiles had refused them any succour. This is made still more clear, by the words of the Gloss, "because for His name they went forth, forsaking their own possessions."

(17.) The seventeenth objection is answered by the fact, that the Church supports many that are sick; and that she could not do so, without the possession of

some material wealth. Hence, it is right for a man to give up his own property, and to hold that of the Church; and it behoves him to act thus, chiefly on account of the poor. But, it does not follow, that it is not expedient for perfect men, who have sacrificed all that belongs to them, to lead a religious life, in an order which possesses no common property. Apostolic perfection is not wanting to those who have possessions in common; but it appears more manifestly, in those who relinquish their private property, and have no property in common.

(18.) We reply to the eighteenth objection, that the decree quoted by it, does not forbid the choice of a life of poverty, for the love of Christ. It is simply a precept commanding bishops, and all in possession of ecclesiastical property, which belongs to the poor, to provide for the poor, as far as they can, and to assist them in their needs. This will be easily perceived by anyone who studies the context of the chapter.

(19.) Our answer to the nineteenth objection is that they who have relinquished all things for Christ, in the trust that He will provide for them, neither sin by presumption, nor do they tempt God. For, to have due confidence in God, is not presumptuous, nor is it tempting Him. Now, the poor of Christ, especially the preachers of the truth, are bound to cherish this confidence in God. The Gloss says on the words in St. Luke (chap. x.), "Carry neither purse," etc., "A preacher ought to have such trust in God that, even though he be not supplied with means to support him in this present life, he ought to be quite certain that necessary things will not be wanting to him, lest in his anxiety about temporal things, he fail to preach eternal truths." Nay, unless he have this confidence in Provi-

dence, he is tempting God. On the words of 1 Cor. x., "neither let us tempt God as some of them tempted Him," the Gloss says: "Let us not ask: 'can God prepare a table in the desert?'" But, we must distinguish between the cases in which this implicit confidence, does, or does not, tempt God. There are certain dangers from which a man cannot be rescued save by miracle; and if he expose himself to such perils he is tempting God. A person would tempt God, who, in hopes of Divine protection, should fling himself from a wall; unless, indeed, he had been miraculously forewarned, that it was the will of God to save him from death. Such foreknowledge was vouchsafed to St. Peter, when, at the command of Jesus, he walked upon the sea; to Blessed Martin, when he said, "Under the protection, not of helmet nor of shield, but of the sign of the Cross, I shall safely make my way through the ranks of the enemy"; to St. John the Evangelist when he courageously swallowed the poisoned draught; to St. Agatha, who said, "Carnal medicine for the body I have never taken; but I possess the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by His word alone, restores all things." There are other cases, wherein a remedy is attainable by inferior means; and a man does not tempt God, who, under such circumstances, trusts entirely to Him. Thus, a soldier does not tempt God by going to battle, although he be uncertain as to the issue of the fight. Neither does he tempt God, who renounces, for His sake, all that he possesses, trusting both in Divine Providence, and in the charity of the faithful, for the supply of his necessities. Rather, does he resemble a man, who, seeing a bear approach, does, for some reasonable motive, resign his weapon of self-defence to armed men, whose duty and desire it is to defend him.

(20.) The answer to the twentieth objection, is, that we are instructed to beg of God, to supply our temporal necessities; and, that we ought not to reject temporal assistance, until we are provided with the food and clothing that we need.

(21.) The statute, quoted in the twenty-first objection, was drawn up in favour of the ministers of the Church. But, if any choose, as a work of supererogation, to serve the Church without stipend, they are so much the more praiseworthy in that they resemble St. Paul, who preached the Gospel without reward; he was a preacher ordained by God (1 Cor. ix.).

(22.) We reply to the twenty-second objection, that, although the holy Fathers have commended one course, they have not blamed the other. Therefore, it is not presumptuous, to follow this other course; else, it would not be lawful to introduce into the Church any new ordinance. Nevertheless, the mode of life of which we speak, cannot be called new; as it was approved by many Saints, even in the primitive Church.

(23.) Our answer to the twenty-third objection, is, that it is a duty for rich men to assist the needy. For, as St. John says, (1 *Ep. iii.*), "He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him?" But it is even more praiseworthy, if a man, besides sacrificing all his possessions, consecrate himself to God. This is truly Apostolic perfection. For, as St. Jerome says, "To offer oneself to God is a truly Christian act and worthy of the Apostles, who, having renounced all they had, offered themselves to the Lord" (*ad Lucinum Beticum*).

CHAPTER VII

IS IT LAWFUL FOR RELIGIOUS TO LIVE ON ALMS?[1]

THE adversaries of Christian poverty strive to prevent its practice, not only by raising objections against it, but by trying, indirectly, to abolish it entirely. They endeavour to deprive the poor of Christ of the means of subsistence, by teaching, that it is not lawful for them to live on alms. They thus come under the category of those of whom the Preacher speaks, (Eccles. xxxiv. 25), "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor: he that defraudeth them thereof, is a man of blood." They try to uphold their opinion by various arguments.

1. They quote the words of Deuteronomy (*xvi.* 19), "Thou shalt not accept person nor gifts: for gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and change the words of the just." Now, alms are a species of gifts; and as religious, above all other men, ought to have the eyes of the soul enlightened, they are not justified in living on alms.

2. "The borrower is servant to him that lendeth"

[1] In the first part of this Chapter St. Thomas recalls five propositions of William of St. Amour, and reproduces the arguments with which he upheld them. In the second part of the Chapter he examines the propositions, and refutes the arguments. The five propositions were: (1) Religious may not live on alms. (2) They may not accept offerings made to them. (3) They may not beg. (4) Preachers who are religious may not receive stipends. (5) Alms ought not to be given to religious.—EDITOR.

(Prov. xxii. 7). Much more, then, is he that accepts a gift, the servant of him that gives it. Now, it behoves religious to be free from the bondage of the world; for they are called unto liberty of spirit. The Gloss, on the words (2 *Thess. iii.*), "That we might give ourselves a pattern unto you," observes: "Our religion calls men to freedom." Therefore, religious ought not to live on alms.

3. Religious make profession of a state of perfection. Now, it is a more perfect thing to give than to receive alms. Hence, in the Acts of the Apostles (xx. 35) it is said: "It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive." Therefore, religious ought, rather, to work with their hands, so that they may be able to give to the needy, instead of receiving from others alms, upon which they are to live.

4. St. Paul, writing to Timothy, (1 Ep. v.), ordains, that widows who have other means of subsistence, are not to live on the charity of the Church, lest they become a burthen to her, and so make it difficult for her to support such as are widows indeed. Therefore, strong, able-bodied men ought to work for their living, and not to deprive the poor of the alms, on which they depend for support. St. Jerome says (I. Q. II. CAP. *Clericos*), "They who are able to live, either on their patrimony, or by means of their work, and yet accept alms, commit a sacrilege; and by their abuse of charity, they eat and drink judgment to themselves." Hence, anyone who has other means of subsistence, and chooses to live on alms, must be reputed as guilty of sacrilege.

5. The Gloss commenting on the text of Thess., "that we might give ourselves a pattern," etc., says: "He that, in his indolence, constantly eats at the table

of another, must, of necessity, flatter his host." Now, they who live on charity, often eat at the expense of their neighbour; they are, therefore, sure to become flatterers. It is sinful in them, therefore, to reduce themselves to a condition, which obliges them to live on alms.

6. The acceptance of gifts cannot be an act of any virtue save of liberality, which is the medium between giving and receiving. But a liberal man only accepts, in order to give, as Aristotle says (V. *Ethic*). Hence, they who spend their lives in accepting, live in a reprehensible manner. St. Augustine in his book *De opere monach.*, thus rebukes certain monks, who wished to live on alms, instead of by work: "These brethren, rashly, in my opinion, assume that they have the right to live by the Gospel, instead of by the labour of their hands." Yet, those whom he thus reproaches, as we know by St. Augustine's own testimony, had renounced all things for the love of Christ, and devoted themselves to spiritual exercises, such as prayer, psalmody, reading, and the Word of God. Hence, they who leave all things for Christ, even if they be entirely occupied in spiritual concerns, ought not to live on alms.

7. We are told in St. Mark's Gospel, that, "He commanded them that they should take nothing for the way but a staff only" (vi. 8). The Gloss remarks, "by *a staff* is signified the power of accepting necessary things from inferiors. But none but prelates have inferiors." Hence, those religious who are not prelates, have no right to accept alms from the faithful.

8. Only they that labour, have a right to the privileges of labour. Now, the privilege granted by Our Lord to those that preach the Gospel, is that they

shall live by the Gospel. This is confirmed by St. Paul (1 Cor. ix. and 2 Tim. ii.), "The husbandman that laboureth ought first to partake of the fruits." Therefore, those that do not preach the Gospel, ought not to live on the charity of the faithful.

9. St. Paul refused to accept alms from the Corinthians, in order to take away occasion from false prophets (2 Cor. ii.). But there are still certain men, who shamefully choose to live on charity; therefore, if only to set them a better example, religious ought not to accept alms. Hence, St. Augustine in his book, *De poere monach.*, says, "you have the same grounds as had the Apostles, to remove the occasion from them that seek occasion."

10. St. Paul refused to accept charity from the Gentiles, in order to avoid giving them any scandal. Hence, the Gloss says, on the words in St. Luke viii., "And many other women ministered unto them": "It was, anciently, customary among the Jews, and was not esteemed any fault, for women, of their own substance, to supply teachers with food and raiment. But, as the Gentiles might have taken scandal at this custom, St. Paul notes, that for this reason, he had abstained from accepting alms from them (1 Cor. ix.)." But many seculars nowadays are scandalized at the sight of religious, who wish to live without manual labour. On this account, it is the duty of religious to refrain from receiving charity. St. Augustine, in his book, *De opere monach.*, says: "In your meditation let your fire flame forth, that you may pursue their evil works by your own good deeds; that, so, you may take from them the occasion of riotous merrymaking, wherein your reputation suffers, and scandal is given to those weak in the faith. Have pity, therefore, and compas-

sion, on other men; and show them, that you do not eat the bread of idleness; but that you seek the Kingdom of God, by a narrow and toilsome road."

11. If religious who are well and strong, may lawfully live on alms, without manual labour, other men are justified in doing the same. But, if everyone pursue the same course, the human race will come to an end; for no one will be found to prepare what is necessary for the support of life. Hence, it can, by no means, be counted lawful, for strong and healthy religious to live on alms.

Our adversaries seek, likewise, to prove, that although religious may live on the alms offered to them, they have no right to beg.

1. We read in Deut. xv. 4, "There shall be no poor nor beggar among you." Hence, it is forbidden for anyone to beg, who can get his living by other means.

2. In Psalm xxxvi. 25, it is written: "I have not seen the just forsaken, nor his seed seeking bread." Therefore, beggars are not the seed of the just man, *i.e.*, of Christ.

3. A curse is not uttered in Holy Scripture against the just. But in Psalm cviii. 10 mendicity is accounted a curse: "Let his children be carried about vagabonds, and beg." Hence, mendicity is not a state befitting perfect men.

4. St. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians (1 Ep. iv. 11), in the following terms: "Work with your own hands, as we commanded you: . . . walk honestly towards them that are without; . . . want nothing of any man's." The Gloss adds: "Therefore should you work, and not live in idleness. This is honourable, and is as a light to unbelievers. You should not desire another man's goods, you should neither ask for them, nor take them."

Hence, it is plain, that manual labour is preferable to begging.

5. St. Augustine thus comments on the words: "if any man will not work," etc.: "The servants of God ought to do some work, whereby they may earn a livelihood; that, so, they may not be compelled by necessity to beg." Thus, we see that they are bound to manual labour rather than to mendicancy.

6. St. Jerome writes to Nepotian: "Let us never ask; and but rarely accept, when we are pressed to do so. For it is more blessed to give than to receive." The servants of God ought, then, neither to beg for, nor to accept, the necessaries of life.

7. The more severe the penalty inflicted, the more heinous, evidently, is the offence committed. This is laid down XXIV. *q.* I., "Let us not use unequal scales." According to civil law, a sturdy beggar, if discovered, is severely punished. For if he be of a servile condition, he is given over to be the slave of his accuser; if he be a freedman, he is condemned to be his perpetual servant (*De mendicant: valid, lib. unica*). Religious in robust health, do, therefore, sin by begging.

8. St. Augustine, in his book *De opere monach.*, thus speaks of mendicant religious: "Our crafty enemy sends out hypocrites, who, in the monastic habit, roam from province to province. They bear no commission. They settle nowhere, and are never at rest. They beg for everything. They exact all things, either as the requirements of their lucrative poverty, or as the reward of their pretended sanctity."

9. That which naturally causes shame in man, is intrinsically disgraceful. For, as St. John Damascene says, we only blush for what is shameful. Now, men are instinctively ashamed of begging; and the nobler a

man's nature, the more acutely he feels the disgrace of mendicancy. Thus, St. Ambrose says, (*lib. De Offic.*), that shame at begging, proves the nobility of a man. And Aristotle (*Ethics* V.) says, that a freedman is "not prone to beg." Mendicity, then, is, in itself, disgraceful; and none ought to resort to it, who can live by any other means.

10. The Gloss, on the words: "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix.), runs as follows: "He who gives in order to rid himself of the importunity of a beggar rather than to relieve the need of a poor man loses the merit of his alms. But, charity is often thus bestowed on beggars; for they weary men by their persistence."

Our opponents likewise try to prove, that even religious who preach, ought not to beg, nor to live on alms.

1. St. Paul says (1 Thess. ii.), "Neither have we used at any time, the speech of flattery, as you know." Now, preachers who beg, and live on alms, are obliged to flatter those whose charity they receive. The Gloss on the words, "and leaving them, he went out" (Matt. xxi.), says: "For as He was poor and flattered none, He received hospitality from no one in the city, save from Lazarus." And yet, for this very cause, the preaching of Our Lord was all the more powerful. For, as St. Luke tells us (xxi. 38), "the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him."

2. Again, St. Paul says (1 Cor. iv. 11), "Even unto this hour, we both hunger and thirst and are naked." On these words the Gloss makes the following comment: "Those who preach the truth, with sincerity and without flattery, and who reprove the vices of mankind, are not favourably heard." Therefore, preachers ought not to ask for alms.

3. St. Paul says, (1 Thess. ii. 5), "Neither have we

taken an occasion of covetousness: God knoweth." The Gloss observes hereon, "The Apostle does not say: 'I have not been covetous,' but 'I have neither said nor done anything that can be an occasion of covetousness.'" Preachers ought to be able to speak in like manner. Those, however, who beg, become, on the contrary, an occasion of covetousness to others.

4. Again, (2 Cor. xii. 14), St. Paul says, "I will not be burthensome unto you. I seek not the things that are yours, but you." Likewise (Philipp. iv. 17) he writes: "Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit." The Gloss says: "By the gift is meant the things given, such as money, food and the like; the fruit signifies the good works, and the upright intention of the giver." True preachers, then, ought not to seek temporal gifts from their hearers. For this reason, they ought not to live by begging.

5. On the words: "the husbandman that laboureth," etc. (2 Tim. ii.), the Gloss says: "The Apostle desires the evangelist to understand, that he may accept that which is needful, from them for whom he labours in God, whom he cultivates as a vinedresser tends his vine, and whom he feeds as a shepherd feeds his flock. For, to act thus, is a right; it is not beggary." Hence, we see that those who preach the Gospel have a claim to live by it; and that they are not mendicants when they do so. But this right belongs only to prelates; and, therefore, other preachers ought not to live by the Gospel.

6. St. Paul (1 Cor. ix.), wishing to show that it was lawful for him to accept alms from the faithful, first proves that he is an Apostle. Those who are not Apostles, have no right to live by the charity of the

faithful. Preaching religious, not being prelates, are not Apostles; therefore they have not this right.

7. The Gloss, commenting on the words of 1 Thess. ii., "whereas we might have been burthensome to you, as the Apostles of Christ," says: "St. Paul points out the hypocrisy of the false prophets, by refusing to ask for the support which he might justly have claimed; in order to rebuke those, who, although they had no right to ask for assistance, blushed not to do so. He speaks of this Apostolic claim to the alms of the faithful, as "a burthen," in allusion to the false prophets, who, unlawfully, usurped the right of asking for charity, and, importunately, urged their pretended claims." It, thus, becomes plain, that, they who require the faithful to support them, must, as they are not Apostles, be accounted to be false prophets. Therefore, preachers who are not prelates, ought not to beg.

8. Preachers who are not prelates, either have, or have not, a right to be maintained by those to whom they preach. If they possess this right, they can enforce it by coercion. This idea is, of course, absurd. If they have no right to such support, they are begging unlawfully and unjustly; and they ought, as we have just shown from the Gloss, to be counted as false prophets.

9. Prelates who receive from the laity tithes and offerings, are bound to provide for their spiritual needs. Hence, if others be commissioned by bishops to minister to the faithful, and to receive alms from them, it is unfair to the people. For it is the bishops, and not the people, who ought to provide for the wants of those whom they send.

10. Prelates who commission others to preach, are bound to supply their necessities (see *Extra De offic.*

ord. INTER CAETERA). If, then, these preachers demand offerings from their hearers, they are doing them an injustice; for they ought not to accept remuneration from them.

11. Our Lord says to the Pharisees (Matt. xxiii. 14), "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, who devour the houses of widows, praying long prayers." Those are equally reprehensible who beg for alms, under the pretext of praying, or preaching, or of any other act of the like nature.

12. Christ, when He sent forth His disciples to preach, said to them: "Into whatsoever city or town you shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy" (Matt. x. 11). The Gloss says, on this verse, "We must choose our host by the testimony of his neighbours, lest his bad life should cause our preaching to be neglected." Again, "He is worthy to entertain us, who understands, that thereby, he receives, rather than confers, a favour." Hence, it is highly reprehensible for preachers to condescend to wealthy sinners, and to those who do not esteem their abode with them to be a favour.

13. He who barters a spiritual for a temporal good commits the sin of simony, whether, like Giezi, he asks for a gift, or whether a gift be offered to him like to that which Elisaeus refused to accept from Naaman (4 Kings v.). The sin is equal, whether it be before or after the work that the gift is accepted (I Q. I. CAP. *Eos*). Now, he who preaches to the people, exercises a spiritual ministry towards them. Hence, a preacher should not accept their temporal gifts, whether he ask for them, or whether they offer them without being asked.

14. St. Paul says: "From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves" (1 Thess. v. 22). The Gloss adds:

"If something appear to be wrong, although it be not actually wrong, do not do it impulsively." Now it has a bad appearance, for a preacher to seek material assistance from those to whom he preaches. Hence St. Paul said: "I seek not those things which are yours, but you" (2 Cor. xii.). For, as the Gloss observes, "the Apostle, lest he might seem to sell the Gospel, desired, not gifts, but fruit." In like manner, preachers ought not to beg for a livelihood, from those to whom they preach.

Our opponents, also, attempt to prove, that alms ought not to be given to religious.

1. They quote the words from St. Luke (xiv. 13), "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind." "From whom," as the Gloss says, "there is nothing to be expected." But you might gain something from strong and healthy beggars, who are often the parasites of rich men. Therefore, we ought not to give to the latter class of mendicant.

2. St. Augustine writes to Vincent the Donatist, that, "it is better to deprive a hungry man of food, than to give bread to one, who, being sure of a livelihood, will forsake justice. For, by succouring such an one, we connive at his evildoing." Now, he who will not, when he is able, work for his living; or he who can get food in a lawful manner without begging, and yet prefers to beg, acts unjustly. Hence, alms should not be bestowed upon him.

3. The Gloss on the words, "Give to every one that asketh of thee," (*Luke* vi.) says, "Give him what he wants or a reproof." Again, on the words, "Give to him that asketh thee," (*Matt.* v.), the Gloss says: "Give in such a way as to injure, neither thyself, nor another. For justice should be balanced. Thus, thou shouldst

give to every one that asketh thee, if not that for which he ask, then some better thing, to wit, a rebuke for asking wrongfully." Now, as we have shown, he that prefers begging to manual labour, begs unjustly; and he deserves reproof rather than alms.

4. St. Augustine, in his letter to the Donatist Vincent, says: "The evil have often persecuted the good, and the good have persecuted the evil. The evil persecuted the good by injustice; and the good persecute the bad by correction." Hence, for the sake of correction, the good may persecute the bad; and to deprive them of food is a species of correction. Now, sturdy beggars sin, even though they preach; and, therefore, ought they to be deprived of food.

5. St. Ambrose, in Book I., *de offic.*, says: "In giving charity, we must take into consideration, the age of him who asks of us, his health, and the boldness wherewith he begs. For, shame in asking for alms often betrays the nobility of him who asks. We must give more abundantly to the aged, who cannot gain a living by the labour of their hands. The sick, likewise, should be promptly relieved; and, those who have fallen from wealth into poverty, not by their own fault, but through robbery, or proscription, or calumny." Now, robust beggars are neither infirm in health, nor shamefaced; neither have they lost their property through robbery nor proscription. Therefore, they should not be succoured by charity.

6. Alms should be given for the purpose of relieving indigence; and the greater the distress, the greater should be our liberality. But those who cannot work for their living, and cannot get support by any other means, are in much greater straits than are they who are able to obtain a livelihood. As long, therefore, as

we find indigent persons belonging to the first category, we should not give to those belonging to the second.

7. Alms-giving is a work of mercy. Therefore, it is to be performed only in behalf of those in need. Now, they that voluntarily reduce themselves to beggary, are not in need. It is only those that are compelled to suffer penury, who can be said to be in want. Aristotle says (3 *Ethics*): "That which is involuntary, deserves mercy and forgiveness." Hence, alms are not to be bestowed on voluntary mendicants.

8. St. Augustine says (1 *De doctr. Christ.*): "As thou canst not assist all, thou shouldst succour those who are most closely bound to thee, by time, or place, or by some other circumstance." Now our closest ties are to our neighbours and our kinsfolk. Therefore, as long as any of our friends are in need, we must not give alms to strangers.

The errors which we have noted, are no novelty. They appeared in the very early days of the Church. In 3 Ep. John iii., we read: "Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, doth not receive us."[1] Again: "and as if these things were not enough for him, neither doth he himself receive the brethren," *i.e.*, "the needy," as the Gloss explains. "And them that do receive them he forbiddeth, and casteth out of the church," *i.e.*, "for fear lest they should succour the needy he suffers them not to go to their wonted place

[1] St. John's words are: "I had written perhaps to the church; but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence amongst them, doth not receive us. Wherefore, if I come, I will publish his works which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and, as if these things were not enough for him, neither doth he himself receive the brethren; and those that do receive them he forbiddeth, and casteth out of the church. Dearly beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good" (3rd Epistle, *v.* 9, 10, 11).—EDITOR.

of meeting" (Gloss). Another commentary on the same text, says: "Thou oughtest to persevere in almsgiving; for it is a work so profitable, that I would have written in its praise, not only to thee, but to the whole Church. But this desire I was constrained to leave unfulfilled; for Diotrephes cares not for our authority."

Diotrephes, a heresiarch of the primitive times of the Church, taught, as we see from the text and the Gloss, that humanity has no claim on our care; and that we should not assist pilgrims who have left their own possessions. Vigilantius revived this heresy, as we learn from the Epistle of St. Jerome to Riparius and Desiderius against Vigilantius. In this Epistle he writes: "Further, I am informed, by the same epistles, that, contrary to the authority of the Apostle Paul, also of Peter, and of John and James, who held out to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of communication, and commanded them to be mindful of the poor, that thou dost forbid any sums to be sent to Jerusalem, for the benefit of the needy."

In combating these errors we shall proceed in the following manner:

1. We shall prove, that those who are poor, because they have given up everything for God, may live on alms.

2. We shall show, that preachers, even though they be not prelates, may, when commissioned by bishops to preach, accept the charity of the faithful to whom they preach.

3. That, even though they be in robust health, they may beg.

4. That they have a special right to the alms of the faithful.

5. We shall confute the arguments brought in support of the contrary propositions.

1. The fact, that those who are poor because they have renounced all things for Christ, have a right to live on alms, is proved by the example of St. Benedict. He, as St. Gregory tells us, (2 *lib. Diolog.*), lived for three years in a cave, after he left his parents' house, dependent on the ministry of the monk Romanus. He was in sound health; but we do not read that he worked for his living.

2. In I. *q.* II. *Cap. Sacerdos,* it is laid down, that "he who has either renounced all his property in favour of his kinsfolk, or has distributed it to the poor, or given it to the Church, and has thus, for love of poverty, made himself poor, is not only free from the guilt of covetousness if he accept assistance from the faithful; but that he may laudably do so, in order thereby to assist the poor, while he himself lives in voluntary poverty." It is thus evident that a man who has renounced all things for Christ, may live on the charity of the faithful.

3. A man is bound rather to sacrifice some good, which he may relinquish without sin, than to commit sin. If, then, they who are in robust health sin by taking alms, they ought to relinquish every other occupation, how good soever, rather than accept charity. This proposition is false, as we see by the words of St. Augustine in *lib. De opere monach.* The Saint says, that "those servants of God who work with their hands, ought to have some time set apart, in which to rest from labour, and to commit to memory that which they ought to know. They ought, he says, to be assisted by the good offices of the faithful, in order that, at the times devoted to learning, they may

not be depressed by want." St. Augustine thus shows, that, in his opinion, monks ought not to be entirely dependent on manual labour for their daily bread; otherwise no opportunity would be afforded them for spiritual exercises.

4. In the same work, St. Augustine, referring to a certain rich man who had given all his wealth to a monastery, says, that "he performed a good work by labouring with his hands, in order to give an example; although, by the benefit which he had conferred on the community, he had a right to be supported by it. For, had he been unwilling to work, who would have dared to urge him to do so?" Hence, we see, that he who bestowes his substance on a monastery, has a right to live in that monastery, without manual labour. But, the Saint further remarks, that as all Christians form one republic, it is of no consequence to which section of the commonwealth each one gives his money, nor from whom he derives support. Hence, they who have left all things for Christ, may accept the necessaries of life from anyone.

5. The intention of refraining from a deed, bad in itself, does not diminish the intrinsic evil of the deed; though, it may lessen the sin committed. If, therefore, it be in itself sinful, for a man who is able to work, to live on alms, those who, although in good health, intend to live for a time on charity, intending at other times to live by other means, cannot be excused from sin. Pilgrims, therefore, who beg on their pilgrimages, commit sin. Sin is, likewise, committed by those who enjoin pilgrimages. This supposition is of course absurd.

6. It is more meritorious in a man to devote himself to divine contemplation, than to the study of philo-

sophy. Some men, however, do, without sin, live for a time on charity, in order to pursue such study. Therefore, it is permissible for others to live for a time on alms, in order to devote themselves to divine contemplation. But, it is more praiseworthy in a man to consecrate himself perpetually to contemplation, than temporarily to study. Consequently it is lawful for men to set aside manual labour, and to live, absorbed in contemplation, on the alms of the faithful.

7. Christian charity forms a closer bond, than does political friendship. Now if anyone make me a present, I am justified in making any use of it that I choose. It is, then, even more permissible for me to live by the things that are given me, for the love of Christ.

8. If it be lawful to accept what is greater, it is still more allowable to receive that which is less. But religious are permitted to receive a certain income (*mille marcharum*), and to live on it, without manual labour. Were such not the case, many communities that are in possession of large properties, would be in a state of damnation. For the same reason, many of the secular clergy who have no cure of souls, live on ecclesiastical possessions, which are the gifts of the faithful. Hence, it is absurd to say, that poor religious may not accept small alms, and live thereby, without manual labour.

9. The poor who are unable to work, are more grossly defrauded, if that which is their due be given to others, than if those others receive that to which they have a claim. Now the income of ecclesiastical property is intended to be given to the poor (SEE XII. QUAEST. I. CAP. *Videntes*). Hence, it is laid down, (I. QUAEST. II. CAP. *Clericus* ET CAP. *Si quis*), that,

"clerics who can live on their own patrimony, cannot, without sin, live on the goods of the Church, which are destined for the support of the poor." Hence, a greater injustice is committed against the poor, if those who, although in good health, do no manual labour, and yet live on ecclesiastical property, than if the poor of Christ live by the private offerings of the faithful, which are not the right of the poor. If those in the first category do not defraud the poor, those who are in the second, most certainly, do not do so. In our treatise on manual labour will be found many other arguments in proof of the same point.

Our next task will be to show that preachers, although they be not prelates, may accept for their maintenance alms, from those to whom they preach.

1. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians (1 Ep. ix. 7), "who serveth as a soldier at any time, at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth the flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" St. Paul alleges these examples, (as the Gloss remarks), in order to prove, that the Apostles did not claim more than was their due, if, according to the precept of Our Lord, they who preached the Gospel lived by it, and likewise freely accepted the charity of those to whom they freely ministered. Now, it is quite certain, that a soldier, and a vinedresser, and a herdsman, ought to live by the fruit of their toil. Therefore, as not only prelates, but all preachers, labour to announce the Gospel, they have a right to accept the means of subsistence from those among whom they labour.

2. St. Paul, likewise, maintains that the Apostles had a right to accept temporal assistance from them, to whom they ministered spiritual good. For, it is

not wonderful if he who gives great things, should receive small things in exchange. To quote St. Paul's own words: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things (1 Cor. ix. 2)?" Now the spiritual truths taught by prelates, are proclaimed equally by all preachers bearing an episcopal commission. There is, therefore, no reason why they, as well as prelates, should not accept material means of support.

3. In the first Chapter of the Epistle just quoted, St. Paul, likewise, says: "The Lord hath ordained that they who preach the Gospel, should, also, live by the Gospel." The Gloss observes: "The reason why this command was given, was, to render preachers more diligent in their office." Now, all, (not only prelates), whose duty it is to preach, ought to be zealous in so doing. Therefore, the rule laid down by Our Lord, applies, not only to prelates, but to all who preach the word of God. This is plain by the very words of St. Paul. He does not say, "all who have ordinary authority to preach," but, "they that preach the Gospel."

4. When Our Lord sent forth His disciples to preach, He said: "In the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have. For the labourer is worthy of his hire." This passage proves that preachers earn their living, as payment due to them from those to whom they preach. The following observation from the Gloss renders this proposition still more clear. "A preacher is entitled to two rewards for his one work. One reward he receives on earth, in the support afforded to him in his labour; the other reward awaits him in heaven, in a glorious resurrection." Now, reward is due not to power, nor

to authority, nor to habit, but to deed; for deeds alone, are meritorious. Aristotle says (I. *Ethic*): "As in the Olympian games, the crown was given, not to the strongest nor to the noblest, but to those who fought most strenuously, and who, therefore, were victorious; so they are rightly deemed the most illustrious, who in life have done the best and bravest deeds." St. Paul again says: "he . . . is not crowned, except he strive lawfully." They, therefore, whether prelates or not, who legitimately preach the Gospel, may lawfully live by it (2 Tim. ii. 5).

5. They who are sent by bishops to preach, labour more than do the others of the order from which they are sent, or than they who, at the bidding of a bishop, send them. But it is lawful for the rest of an order to live on the alms given to its preachers, even though those preachers be not prelates. This is proved by the following words: "It hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a contribution for the poor of the saints, that are in Jerusalem. For it hath pleased them; and they are their debtors. For, if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things," (*i.e.*, according to the Gloss, "partakers of the spiritual advantages of the Jews who had sent them preachers from Jerusalem"), "they ought also, in carnal things to minister unto them" (*Rom. xv.* 26). Now by the "poor" of whom St. Paul here speaks, we cannot understand the Apostles. For, as they were only twelve in number, and were content with little, they did not need a collection to be made for them in all the Churches; especially as we know that they were supported by those to whom they preached (1 Cor. ix.). Hence, all preachers, even though they be not bishops,

but are sent by bishops, have a right to live by the Gospel.

6. They, who, by episcopal commission, are employed in preaching, are of far greater use to bishops in spreading the word of God, than are they who are engaged in other functions of the ministry. Now, prelates who preach may accept alms, not only for themselves, but for their households. More justly, then, may they who preach by episcopal commission, accept from the faithful the means of subsistence.

7. He who gives to another, *gratis*, that which he is not obliged to give, has as good a right to take a reward, as he who does merely what he is obliged to do. Now it is a bounden duty for bishops to minister to their flocks in spiritual matters. For, as St. Paul says: "If I preach the Gospel, it is no glory to me; for a necessity lieth upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel" (1 *Cor. ix.* 16). They, therefore, who are not prelates, and have not the responsibility of a flock, are justified in accepting material assistance from those to whom they preach.

8. St. Augustine says in LIB. *de. op. monach:* "If they (*i.e.*, religious) be preachers of the Gospel, I admit their right," *i.e.* to live on the alms of the faithful. But these words apply, not only to prelates, but to all such as can preach, even to deacons. Hence St. Paul says (Eph. iv. 11): "He gave some Apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors." The Apostle thus draws a distinction between Evangelists and pastors, and Apostles, by which term we are to understand prelates. Hence, all preachers, be they prelates or not, may live by the Gospel.

9. Preaching is the noblest of all ecclesiastical func-

tions. Our Lord declared that this was the purpose of His advent into the world. "For this was I sent" (*Luke iv.* 43). Isaias, also speaking in the person of Christ, says: "He hath sent me to preach to the meek" (Isa. lxi. 1). St. Paul, likewise, says: "Christ sent me, not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel" (1 Cor. i. 17). Now, they who are engaged in the business of the Church, ought not to work with their hands, but to live on the property of the Church, as St. Augustine says, (in *lib. de Opere Monach.*), speaking of himself. This rule applies, much more forcibly, to those engaged in preaching, who have every right to live by the Gospel, instead of by manual labour.

10. The office of a preacher is more useful to the community, than is that of an advocate. But advocates may, from the legitimate exercise of their profession, earn a livelihood. Therefore, preachers, may, if their preaching be authorised, live by means of it, whether they be prelates or no.

11. Although alms cannot be given out of money made by usury, preachers may, nevertheless, accept alms from money thus gained, provided they cannot, without so doing, remain in a place inhabited by usurers. The reason for this concession is, that preachers, by inducing usurers to restore their ill-gotten gains, are directing the affairs of those, to whom this money is due. This is distinctly established in the decretal *Extra* DE SENT. EXCOM. CAP. *Cum voluntate.* But, preachers are, in like manner, occupied with the affairs of all men, both rich and poor, when they urge the rich to give alms to the poor, and to perform other salutary works. Hence, they are justified, in accepting alms from those to whom they preach.

12. We see that in mechanical trades, it is not they

only who work with their hands who live by the trade, but the architect who directs their labour, profits by it likewise. Now, the man who teaches morals, is, so to speak, the architect of all human duties (*see* I. *Ethics*). Therefore, preachers have a right to live by their preaching, even though they do not work with their hands.

13. Health of soul is to be preferred before health of body. Physicians live without manual labour, by giving advice to their patients. Therefore, those who are engaged about the spiritual welfare of others, have a right to accept alms for their maintenance, even though they do not labour with their hands.

Our next task will be to show that preachers may not only live by alms freely offered to them, but that they may likewise beg for charity.

1. This is proved by the example of Christ, speaking in whose person, the Psalmist says: "But I am a beggar and poor" (Ps. xxxix. 18). The Gloss remarks on this text: "Christ speaks thus of Himself in the form of a servant." Again: "a beggar is one who asks from another; a poor man one who has not enough for himself."

2. In Ps. lxix. 6, we find the words: "But I am needy and poor." On which the Gloss says: "'I am needy'; *i.e.*, begging, and poor, *i.e.*, 'I have not wherewith to support myself.'" He who speaks thus, owns no material wealth; and, having spiritual riches, he ever desires more, craves for it, and receives it.

3. In Ps. cviii. 17, we read: "He persecuted the poor man, and the beggar," *i.e.* "Christ," as the Gloss expounds it. Another commentary says: "It is pure malice to persecute the poor. Rich men may sometimes suffer persecution on account of their position or

wealth." Both these commentaries show, that these words of the Psalm, are understood as being an allusion to material poverty.

4. St. Paul says (2 Cor. viii. 9): "You know the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich, He became poor for your sakes," *i.e.*, "in the world" (Gloss). That the poverty of Christ ought to be imitated, is proved by the Gloss in the following words: "Let no one despise himself. He that inhabits a poor dwelling is rich in conscience; and he sleeps more peacefully on the ground, than the wealthy man can rest amidst his gold and purple. Fear not, then, in thy misery, to approach Him who has put on our poverty."

5. Our Lord asked for hospitality. We know this by His words to Zacchaeus: "Come down quickly; for to-day I must abide in thy house" (Luke xix. 5). The Gloss says: "He offers Himself, although He has not been invited. For He knows the disposition of Zacchaeus' heart, although he has uttered no word of invitation."

6. We read in St. Mark xi. 11: "Having viewed all things round about, when now the eventide was come." The Gloss understands these words to mean: "having looked all round about Him, to see if any would offer Him hospitality. For, He was so poor and so carefully avoided flattering any man, that He found none to shelter Him in all that large city." Hence, we see, that the poverty of Our Lord was so extreme, that He possessed not wherewith to hire a lodging, but sought and hoped for hospitality from others. It is, therefore, blasphemous to say, that it is unlawful to beg.

7. The same lesson is taught by the example of the Apostles. They were instructed by Our Lord not to take with them on their way, the necessaries for their

journey (*Matt. x., Mark vi., Luke ix. and x.*). They could not have taken what they needed, as a right; they must, therefore, have begged it.

8. Again, the same fact is made evident by the conduct of the Apostles, after the resurrection of Christ. St. John says (3 Ep. v. 7.): "For his name, they went out," ("away," as the Gloss expresses it), "taking nothing of the Gentiles." Hence, they went forth, without the necessaries of life. These they must, therefore, have gained by begging.

9. A man is more strictly bound to provide for himself, than for others. Now, the Apostles asked for alms for "the poor of the saints who were in Jerusalem." If, then, it be lawful to beg for our brethren, it is equally right to do so for ourselves.

10. The example of St. Alexis shows that mendicancy is permissible. This Saint, having renounced all things for the love of Christ, lived, not by work, but by begging. He asked for alms even from the servants whom his father sent to seek him; and he thanked God that he received charity from them. His sanctity was made known by a voice from Heaven. This voice was heard by the Pope, by the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius, and by the people of Rome assembled in the basilica of St. Peter. The voice announced that the preservation of Rome was due to the merits of Alexis. After the death of the Saint, his fame was spread by means of many miracles; and he was canonised. His feast is solemnly observed by the whole Roman Church.

11. St. Jerome writing to Oceanus in praise of Fabiola, says of her, that "she desired to sacrifice her riches and to live on charity." Had this wish been

sinful on her part, she could not have been commended for it.

12. That which is unlawful, cannot be imposed by the Church as a penance. But, for certain grave offences, a sinner may be enjoined to make a pilgrimage, and to beg his way. Hence, mendicancy is not sinful, but may be a penitential exercise. It may, therefore, be practised, together with other works of penance, for the love of God, and as a means to perfection.

13. As Vigils, fasting, and such-like macerations of the flesh, are employed as means, whereby to combat concupiscence, so everything that tends towards humiliation diminishes pride, which is as much to be avoided as lust; since, as St. Gregory says, spiritual sins are the more heinous. Now, no penitential exercise can be more humiliating than mendicancy: for man is naturally ashamed of begging. Hence, as fasting and watching, regarded in the light of bridles to concupiscence, pertain to the state of perfection; mendicancy, likewise, embraced for the love of Christ and for the sake of humility, pertains to the same state.

14. Again, the charity of Christ is more liberal, than is the friendship of the world. Now, even in human friendship, friends make no difficulty about asking each other for what they need, particularly in cases where some return can be made for what is given. The form in which such return is made, is of no consequence, as the philosopher says (V. *Ethic*). Hence it is permissible, for a man, even though he be in good health, to ask for the love of God, for what he needs; especially as he can make a return to the donor, by prayers and spiritual works.

15. It is lawful to ask another for a favour, if, by so doing, we give him a chance of improving his condition.

Now, by giving alms, a man betters his condition, by meriting eternal life. Hence, it cannot be unlawful to ask for charity.

16. The needs of the poor cannot be relieved, unless they be known; and they cannot be known unless they be revealed. Hence, if it be right that any should be in a state of destitution, it is right that they should beg for what they need. But, as we have already proved, it is lawful for men to reduce themselves to such poverty, for the love of God, that even, (as St. Augustine says in LIB. *De opere monach.*), their manual labour does not suffice to support them. It is, therefore, justifiable in them to beg.

We shall now prove that it is right to give alms to mendicant religious.

1. St. John says (3rd Ep.), "Dearly beloved, thou dost faithfully whatever thou dost for the brethren, and that for strangers." He immediately points out to whom he refers by saying: "for his name they went out" (*i.e.*, "leaving their own possessions," Gloss). And again, "We, therefore, ought to receive such." The Gloss here remarks: "John had renounced all things; but he speaks of himself as belonging to the number of the rich, in order to make those whom he addresses, more prompt, and more ready, in succouring the needy." Hence, it is praiseworthy to give alms to those, who, for the love of Christ, live without possessions of their own.

2. We read in Matt. x. 41, "He that receiveth a just man in the name of a just man" shall receive the reward of a just man. The Gloss remarks, that "on this account he is called just." The Gloss also adds: "Someone may therefore say: 'We shall thus receive false prophets, and the traitor Judas.' But the Lord,

foreseeing this objection, says not, that persons are to be received but their names; and, that, he who receives another, shall not be deprived of a reward on account of the unworthiness of the object of his charity." Hence, we must conclude, that alms are to be given to them that bear, even though unjustly, the name of sanctity.

3. St. Paul (Rom. xv.) praises the faithful of Macedonia and Achaia, for their resolution to make a collection for the poor among the Saints. The Gloss remarks hereon: "These men devoted themselves wholly to the Divine service, heeding no worldly matters, and caring only to set an example of holy living to them that believed." The Achaians and Macedonians had made a collection for these good men; and St. Paul invites the Romans to do the same. Hence, we see, that alms may be given to the poor of Christ.

4. The Gloss says, commenting on the words: 2 Cor. viii., "let your abundance supply their want," *i.e.*, "the want of those who have renounced all earthly things." These words are a further confirmation of the opinion which we have already expressed.

5. Again, on the words, "But you, brethren, be not weary of well doing" (2 Thess. iii. 14), the Gloss observes, that "'well doing' here signifies doing good to the poor." Another commentary says: "Because, although they work, they are still in need of certain things. Thus, St. Paul warns the faithful, that, if they have the means of supplying the necessities of the servants of God, they should not be remiss in so doing." A man cannot be blamed for generosity: he, only, deserves rebuke who, while able to work, prefers to lead an idle life. Hence, it is praiseworthy to give alms to the servants of God, whether they work or not, even though they may be to blame for not working.

6. St. Jerome says, when writing against Vigilantius: "We do not deny, that, if anyone is able to do so and is generously minded, he may give alms to all poor men, even to Samaritans and Jews. The Apostle teaches that charity is to be given to all men, but chiefly to them that are of the household of the Faith. It is of such that Our Lord says: 'Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, who will receive you into everlasting dwellings.' But can these poor persons, whose physical degradation corresponds with their mental depravity, receive us into everlasting dwellings, when they possess no home at the present time, and have no hope of any habitation in the future? It is not simply the poor, but the poor in spirit that are called 'blessed.' And it is of such that the Psalmist writes: 'Blessed is the man that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor' (Ps. xl.). In order to succour the ordinary poor, alms are necessary, not understanding. In order to assist the holy poor mentioned in the beatitude, there must be intelligence, in order that alms may be given to him who is grieved and ashamed to accept them, and who, reaping material advantage, sows spiritual good." Hence, we see that it is better to give alms to the poor who are holy, than to any others.

7. On the words, "he hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor," (2 Cor. ix.), the Gloss thus comments: "If the reward of him that giveth to the poor, be great, how much greater shall be the prize awarded to him that ministers to the saints? For anyone may be poor, even though he be wicked." This is a further argument, in favour of the opinion that we have just expressed.

8. St. Jerome thus comments on the words: "Let

him that is instructed in the word communicate to him that instructeth him" (Gal. vi. 6): "St. Paul commands those that were infirm disciples and carnal men, to contribute to the material needs of the masters, from whom they have received spiritual instruction, and who, being entirely devoted to study, lack the necessaries of life." Hence, we see that alms are to be given, not to such as work with their hands, but to those that are engaged in the study of the Scripture.

9. St. Jerome, likewise, writes thus to Paulinus: "He is rather to be considered a courtier than a monk, who always, or often, talks of money, and who takes no heed of the alms which belong to all." From which words it is evident, that alms are to be given to monks, and to all others; and that monks have a right to speak of asking for charity.

10. We read in *decret. dist. xlii.*: "If any man contemn those who faithfully prepare the agapes, or banquet of the poor, and call the brethren together for the glory of God, and despises the work they do, let such an one be anathema." It is, therefore, a crime worthy of excommunication, to condemn the practice of almsgiving.

11. We read in Prov. xxi. 13: "He that stoppeth his ear against the cry of the poor, shall also cry himself; and he shall not be heard." The Gloss observes: "These words refer to the poor considered generally, not only to the sick or destitute. For, he who prefers to judge his neighbour, rather than to pity his sinfulness, shows that he himself is not free from guilt, nor worthy to be heard by the Divine mercy." Alms, then, are to be given to all who are poor, even though they be in robust health.

12. On the words of Ps. ciii.: "Bringing forth grass

for cattle, and herbs for the service of men," the Gloss says: "The earth being fertile, was able to produce grass, (*i.e.*, material subsistence) for cattle, (*i.e.*, for preachers), in order that they who preach the Gospel may live by the Gospel. If the earth bring not forth this temporal support for preachers it is barren. If it produce these material good things it is bearing fruit." And again: "Preachers have a right to material assistance, since they impart spiritual gifts. It is of them that it is written: 'blessed is he that anticipates the voice of him that asks.' Thou oughtest not to act towards the ox that treadeth out the grain, as thou dost act towards the beggar who passes by. Thou dost give to him that asketh, for thou hast read 'Give to him that asketh of thee.' But thou shouldst likewise give to him that asketh not." Again, the Gloss says: "give to every one that asketh, whoever he may be, recognising in his person Him to Whom thou givest. But, much more, give to the servant of God, the soldier of Christ, who asketh not." Hence, we see, that, if we are to bestow alms on all the poor, even on those who do not beg for them, preachers ought in an especial manner to be assisted by those who hear them.

13. In St. Luke xvi. 9, we read: "Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity." Here, the Gloss remarks: "this text does not refer to the poor indiscriminately, but to those who can receive us unto everlasting dwellings." Now the poor of Christ, beyond all others, can receive us into everlasting dwellings; for they, together with Christ, will be our judges. Therefore, it is, especially, to them that we should give alms.

We must now reply to the objections of our opponents.

1. To the argument that "temporal possessions blind the eyes of the wise," we reply, that temporal possessions may be understood in a twofold sense. First they may be considered as hoarded up. Now to accept them in order thus to treasure them, is an act of covetousness which blinds the eyes of the soul, and causes it to decline from justice. But temporal things may also be accepted, in order to supply necessary food, and raiment; and to accept them for this reason, is not cupidity, and does not blind the eyes of the soul.

This distinction is grounded on the words of St. Paul, (1 *Tim. vi.* 8): "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content." The Gloss remarks: "He who goes beyond that, finds that which is evil." Hence it is added: "For they that will become rich, fall into temptation, and into the snare of the devil."

2. There are two kinds of slavery, to wit the slavery of fear, and the slavery of love. He who accepts gifts from cupidity, is enslaved by fear; for the things acquired by cupidity are possessed in fear. Now, we ought to be free from this servitude and we ought to be the servants of Christ. For, as St. Paul says (Rom. viii. 15), "you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear." They who accept gifts in charity, are the bondsmen of love; and the servants of Christ are not free from this bondage. Hence St. Paul says, (2 Cor. iv. 5), "We preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ Our Lord, and ourselves your servants, through Jesus." Hence, he, who, in order to fulfil the duties of charity, accepts alms for his bodily sustenance, incurs, not a bondage unworthy of the servants of

Christ, but only such as befits the servants of the Lord.

3. The act of giving, is, in itself, more meritorious than that of receiving. Hence Aristotle says (IV. *Ethic*), "the act of liberality is greater in giving than in receiving, although a liberal man may both give and receive. There is nothing, however, to prevent the act of receiving, from being, at times, from some special circumstance, the more commendable. It would, then, although exceptionally, be more praiseworthy than that of giving." If, then, nothing be considered in a poor man, save the fact that he accepts charity, the rich man who gives the alms, is more blessed, than the poor man who receives it. But, circumstances may render the recipient of charity more meritorious, than the giver. Thus, a man, who, for the love of Christ, has made himself voluntarily poor, and accepts alms, is more blessed than the rich man who bestows the gift. Hence, the Gloss remarks: "The Lord does not prefer rich men who give alms, to the poor who have renounced all for His sake; but He gives the greatest glory to them, who, after forsaking all their possessions, labour with their hands, in order to have something to give to those in need." Now, this conduct is, certainly, very commendable in such as are not engaged in more important occupations. And, it would be most perfect, if religious, without detriment to such occupation, could, as we have before said, perform some manual labour, and give their earnings in charity. But, religious are not bound to do everything that is perfect; they are only bound to accomplish that to which their vows oblige them.

4. It is no burthen to the Church, if religious live on alms, seeing that, although they produce great fruits

in the Church, their wants are very small. In fact, such religious, do, in reality, lighten the expenses of the Church; for they perform at very small cost, labours for which others, who are not satisfied with so little, would require much larger sums. Neither do mendicant orders deprive the poor of their rights; for, by their counsel and influence, much larger sums are given to the poor, than they themselves receive. And further, these religious before entering their monastery, gave away all their goods to the poor, who have thus received far more than the alms bestowed on mendicant orders.

5. The decree cited in this objection, is misquoted. This is evident, by the words of Gratian, given in the next chapter. These authorities forbid the Church to receive, not such as were originally rich, but left all things, as did Peter, Matthew, and Paul, or who, like Zacchaeus, distributed their goods to the poor, or presented them to the Church, as did the early Christians who sold all that they had, and laid the price at the feet of the Apostles. What is forbidden to the Church is to receive those who, while living in the house of their parents, or refusing to sacrifice their patrimony, desire at the same time to enjoy ecclesiastical benefices.

6. St. Augustine speaks of those religious who live idle lives, and, being of no use to those who maintain them, are forced to gain their bread by flattery. For, no one will support a useless person, unless his favour be secured by adulation. But, those religious, to whom charity is extended for the love of Christ, and who, in exchange for material assistance, confer spiritual benefits, have no need to flatter their benefactors. For, they that relieve them, do so for the love of Christ, who has said, "he that receiveth you, receiveth Me" (*Matt.*

x. 40). Now, as the Gloss says, "nothing is received in the Apostles, save what is in Christ." Hence, they, who, for the love of God, become poor, and beg, and live on alms, need not resort to flattery. Those, who are really driven to servility and adulation, are wealthy sycophants, who, in order to preserve and increase their riches, are obliged to flatter the sovereigns, on whom they depend. Thus St. Chrysostom writes, (*super Matth.*): "Princes, and soldiers, and subjects, are obliged to flatter, and to stand in need of many things. They are reduced to ignominious servility; they live in fear; hence they are exposed to the suspicion and calumny of those that envy them. Far other is the lot of the poor."

7. It is true, that, to receive is not an act of liberality, (excepting in so far as receiving stands in relation to giving). But, in those who, for the love of Christ, have made themselves poor, it is an act of humility to accept as alms the necessaries of life; and humility is a greater virtue than liberality.

8. St. Augustine, in the place quoted in the objection, had two reasons for rebuking monks who desired to live on alms. First, he reproved them for falling into the error of believing manual labour to be contrary to the evangelical precept: "Be not solicitous for your body" (*St. Matt. vi.* 25). Secondly, he reproached them for the sloth which caused them to desire to escape from the laborious lives, which they had led in the world. He says, that it, by no means, beseems artisans to be idle in a life, wherein senators work hard. He does not, however, forbid those, who, in the world lived on their own income, or those occupied in ecclesiastical offices, to live on alms after the example of the early Christians of the Church of Jerusalem.

This is plain to anyone who will read his words with care. Religious are not forbidden to live, like poor men, on alms; even though they cannot, by preaching, claim a right to do so. For, charity is given with a different intention to the preacher, and to the mendicant, as the Gloss observes on the words in Ps. cxiii., "bringing forth grass for cattle."

9. Prelates who preach the Gospel have, as we have said, a right to accept the necessaries of life from their subjects. For, recompense is due, not to power, or authority, but to labour. Likewise, when religious preach, by episcopal authority, it stands to reason, that they must be assisted by those to whom they minister. But there are other reasons, which make it fitting, that religious should have their wants supplied by the charity of the faithful. They have left all things for Christ. They minister at the altar, and the Holy sacrifice profits all men. They also devote themselves to the study of Holy Scripture, to prayer, to contemplation, and to other spiritual exercises, which are all beneficial to the whole Church.

10. There is nothing inconsistent in the fact, that one man accepts assistance as his due, and that another receives it as a favour and charity. The alms given to a preacher, are but the just return for his labour; but assistance may be rendered to all poor men, not as their due recompense, but out of a spirit of charity.

11. More harm was done in the Church by the teaching of the false prophets, from whom St. Paul, by labouring with his hands, took away the occasion of living on the charity of the faithful, than was done by the Apostle's supporting himself by his own labour. Now, on the contrary, the Church derives profit from the example of humility set by the mendicant orders,

who live on alms, and devote themselves to the salvation of souls, instead of to manual labour. This advantage outweighs the harm done by a few men, who live on charity as an excuse for their sloth. There is, therefore, no reason why the poor of the Church should cease to receive alms, in order to take away the occasion of those who make bad use of them.

12. It was the custom amongst the Jews, that their teachers should be maintained by the people. At the preaching of the Gospel, this custom became general among the faithful. When the Gentiles were first converted, the Apostles refused to ask or accept assistance from them, fearing lest they might take scandal. There is now, however, no reason to fear such scandal. Indeed, the example of moderation in food and raiment set by religious, is a subject rather of edification than of scandal. They who profess to be scandalized at the sight of religious accepting alms, are like the Pharisees, who, as we are told in St. Matt. xv., took scandal at Our Lord, and whom He bade His disciples to ignore. The case would be very different, were religious to accept alms, not in order to provide for themselves the necessities of life, but for the sake of amassing wealth, or of indulging in riotous living.

13. To the thirteenth objection, we may reply, as St. Jerome replied to Vigilantius, that according to the same reasoning virginity is not a good thing; "for, if all were virgins, the human race would cease." Again, "virtue is rare, and desired by few; would that all men resembled those few of whom it is said: 'many indeed are called but few are chosen.'" This is the answer to the thirteenth objection. The works of perfection are so difficult, that, but very few attempt to accomplish them. There is, therefore, no grounds for

fearing that the world will cease to exist, on account of the perfection of its inhabitants.

We must now proceed to answer the arguments of those who maintain, that it is not lawful to seek alms by begging.

1. The words: "There shall be no poor man and no beggar amongst you," do not forbid persons to embrace the condition of poverty and mendicity. These words prohibit men to leave their neighbours in a condition of misery, which forces them to beg. This is proved by the words occurring in the same chapter of Deuteronomy: "of thy countrymen and neighbour thou shalt not have power to demand it again." On these words, the Gloss observes: "Although all men be our neighbours, we are chiefly bound to show mercy to those, who, together with ourselves, are the members of Christ." Hence, although charity is enjoined, mendicity is not forbidden.

2. The Gloss interprets the words, "I have not seen the just man forsaken by God," to mean: "I have not seen the seed of the just man perishing for want of spiritual food, *i.e.* the Word of God; for the Word of God is always with him." But, if this text be understood to refer to material bread, it means that the just are not reduced to beggary by necessity, or because God has deserted them; since it is said: "I will not leave thee nor forsake thee" (Hebr. xvi. 5). The words do not mean, that just men may not, for love of God, embrace poverty; although they did not do so in the days of the Psalmist. For such works of perfection were reserved for the time of Grace.

3. It is not unfitting, that that which is inflicted on one man as a penalty, may be, in another, a self-imposed work of justice. Criminals have their goods

confiscated as a legal punishment; but this is no reason why other men may not despoil themselves of their possessions for the love of God. Again, beggary may fall upon sinners as a Divine chastisement; but this is no reason why mendicity, voluntarily embraced for Christ, should not be a work of justice.

4. The Gloss understands the text quoted in the fourth objection, to mean, that men are not to beg avariciously. Otherwise the commentary would not be in harmony with the text. The text says: "that you want nothing of any man's." Now they beg avariciously, who seek, not merely necessary food and raiment, but who further desire to amass riches. This, as has been already pointed out, is made clear by the words in 1 Tim. vi. quoted above.

5. There are two kinds of mendicity, to wit, voluntary and compulsory. Those reduced to beggary against their will, are liable to be tempted to impatience. Voluntary mendicity, which does not proceed from avarice, has the merit of humility. Hence, St. Augustine does not forbid voluntary mendicity. He simply teaches, that the occasion of compulsory beggary should be avoided by the poor of Christ, by means of manual labour. This is evident by his words: "that they may not be compelled by need," etc.

6. The sixth objection is quite irrelevant to the matter in hand. For, the words of St. Jerome refer to the habit of asking for, and accepting, superfluities. This is evident by what he says in his letter to the priest Nepotian.

7. The law referred to, applies to sturdy beggars who were useless to the state, and who, living idle lives, defrauded other poor people of their rights. The law in question speaks of them as slothful men. Of this

class are gluttons who beg for food which they may eat in idleness. Religious cannot, except in malice, be held to belong to this class. It need not, always, be a heinous sin which is punished severely; for, chastisement is inflicted, not merely as a penalty for guilt, but also as a warning to the offender, or to others. Hence, at times, a heavy penalty is awarded to an offence, which, though not heinous in itself, is habitual. This is done, in order that it may act as a deterrent to the criminal. The chapter quoted in the objection, refers only to punishment inflicted to avenge sin.

8. Those of whom St. Augustine speaks, begged not merely for necessaries, but for superfluities. Their holiness, therefore, was not true, but hypocritical. This is made clear by the fact, that he speaks of their "desiring luxurious poverty," or "the recompense of feigned sanctity." In thus acting, they were, of course, reprehensible.

9. Shame results from a base action: baseness is opposed to beauty. Hence, baseness, and the shame consequent upon it, must be distinguished, according to the kind of beauty to which it is opposed. Beauty may be either spiritual, or physical. Spiritual beauty consists in a well ordered soul, and in abundance of spiritual gifts. Hence, all that arises from deficiency of spiritual good, or which points to spiritual disorder, is base. Physical beauty consists in symmetry of body, and in the due proportion of such things as pertain to corporeal perfection. Bodily deformity, or deficiency, is, in a certain sense, base. And as both spiritual and physical beauty are loved and desired, spiritual and physical deformity cause a certain shame. Thus, a man is ashamed of being poor, or unsightly, or ignorant, or awkward. Since spiritual deformity is always repre-

hensible, all that produces the shame of such deformity ought to be avoided. We speak not of the confession of sins; for the sinner is ashamed, not of his confession, but of the guilt which he acknowledges. But, holy men think little of physical defect or deformity. In fact, they embrace it, willingly, for the love of Christ, and for the sake of perfection. Hence, the ignominy that accompanies such physical deformity, is not always an object of contempt. Sometimes, indeed, it is worthy of high praise, as when it is assumed for the sake of humility. Now, beggary is shameful, inasmuch as it is a disgrace attached to a material deficiency. For a beggar acknowledges that he is poor, and is often subject to him, to whom he appeals for the relief of his needs. But beggary undertaken for the sake of Christ, deserves honour, rather than contempt.

10. A man who is asked for charity ought not to be wearied, if the petition be properly made. And if he be wearied, the fault lies in him for giving alms in order to free himself from importunity, rather than with him who asks, in a becoming manner, for the relief of his needs. But, if the petition be not rightly made, the fault lies with the petitioner.

We shall next undertake to answer, in their proper order, the arguments of those who hold that religious who preach may not live on charity, or beg for alms.

1. It by no means follows that because preachers live on alms, they must, necessarily, be flatterers. When they preach without flattery, they often find but small favour among wicked and carnal-minded men, although they are approved of by the good; nay sometimes they have to suffer, at the hands of those, whose favour they could not win without adulation. At other times, they are well received by good men,

who do not wish to be flattered. They thus resemble Our Lord who, at times, had no roof to shelter Him, and, at other times, was entertained by many, and who received the ministry of women who followed Him, as we read in St. Luke (viii.). Thus, likewise, the Apostles sometimes endured great distress; and at other times they were well supplied, behaving with discretion under both circumstances. "I know," says St. Paul (Phil. iv. 12), "how to abound, and how to suffer want." Vicissitudes of this description are the common experience of poor preachers in our own days.

2. Preachers, by asking for charity, do nothing that can be an occasion of avarice. Avarice is an inordinate love of possessing. It is not inordinate to wish to have necessary food and clothing. "Having what to eat, and wherewith to be clothed, with these we are content" (1 Tim. vi. 8). Hence, poor men are not, by begging for the necessities of life, exposed to any danger of avarice.

3. Preachers ought not to desire material assistance as their primary end or object. They may, however seek such temporal goods as a secondary end, or as the means, whereby they may be enabled to achieve their primary end, which is the preaching of the Gospel. Commenting on the words, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice" (Matt. vi. 36), the Gloss says: "By these words, Our Lord shows us that we are not to desire temporal things as our chief, and most necessary good. We are to seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and to set it before us as our end, and to do all things for the attainment of that end. Let us, then, eat, in order to preach; but not preach, in order to eat."

4. The stipend which preachers receive is due to them for their work. They have a twofold right to the alms which they accept. A debt may be due by

a double right. Some have a right to payment as a debt of legal justice due to them. Such a debt is the one resulting from the compact made between a workman and his employer, whereby the labourer can sue his employer for his wages. Others can, likewise, claim a reward, as a debt of friendly justice. For, when one man does a service to another, it is only fair, that that other should make the best return within his power; although his friend cannot, legally, compel him to make any return. Aristotle speaks of this twofold sort of justice in VIII. *Ethics.* I maintain, therefore, that when a prelate is set over the people, they have a right to demand spiritual ministrations from him; and he has a right to claim material assistance from them. But the people cannot claim spiritual service from any, save prelates. Neither on the other hand, (even though they preach by the permission of prelates), can any of the clergy, who are not prelates, claim material assistance from the laity. They can only do so, if they be appointed to be, in all things, the vicars of prelates. Hence, we see, that the poor, who render no service whatsoever, stand on a different footing in the matter of accepting alms, to religious who preach by permission of prelates, and are not themselves prelates, and to prelates themselves. For the poor accept everything gratis; and thus are mere mendicants. But preachers, who are not prelates, accept charity as a recompense due to them, although they cannot enforce its payment. Bishops, however, have compulsory power and can exact payment as a right. Nevertheless, if he who has the right to demand some thing, does not assert this right, but begs for what he needs, as if it were a free gift, he does no harm to anyone; but by his example, he shows the beauty of humility.

5. The fifth objection is answered by saying that St. Paul wished to show that he had as good a right as the other Apostles, to receive the donations of the faithful. And, in order to make good this point, he began by proving that he was an Apostle, even as were the other Apostles.

6. The false apostles were unjust usurpers when they accepted the contributions of the faithful. Three reasons prove this. First, they taught a doctrine that was false, and contrary to the Gospel. For, as the Gloss observes, on the words "we likewise beseech you, brethren," (Rom. xvi.), "they forced believers to follow Jewish rites." Secondly, they preached without any commission from the true Apostles. Therefore St. Paul says that they "came in privately." Thirdly, they behaved as if they possessed the authority of Apostles. Now, as the objection ignores these three points, the reasoning contained in it, is worthless.

7. Preaching religious beg for what is, according to the second mode of justice, due to them; for a debt is a matter of justice. But they are the more to be commended, in as much as they ask for that which is their due, as though it were a free gift.

8. Prelates who receive tithes and offerings from their people, and who duly minister to them, may elect certain coadjutors to assist them more efficiently in so doing. Such conduct is not unfair to the faithful. For, if the laity give more temporal alms than is agreed upon, they receive, in return, more spiritual assistance than the prelates are obliged to give. Furthermore, their alms are not taken as a right, but are accepted thankfully and humbly.

9. Everyone may renounce what is owing to him. Thus, although bishops are bound to support those

whom they send to preach, the preachers may renounce their claim to such support. They do not, for this reason, become a burthen on the people to whom they are sent. For, they ask nothing from them save necessary food; and this they do not claim as a right, but beg as an alms, according as each one of their hearers may have determined in his heart. They, thus, imitate the example of St. Paul (2 *Cor. chapters viii. and ix.*).

10. Hypocrites were rebuked by Our Lord for seeking gain by means of prayer and of superstitious practices. The Gloss says: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees; for by your superstitions, you aim at nothing, save at despoiling those who listen to you." But it is rash to pass this judgment on anyone; for his private motive is the secret of each man's own heart.

11. Preachers have no right to consort with persons of bad character, if there is danger that the vices of such persons may be attributed to them likewise, and if their preaching may, for this reason, fall into discredit. St. Gregory says: "If a man's conduct be despised, his preaching will be contemned." The Gloss speaks in like manner. If, however, preachers, without losing their own reputation, make friends with men of bad character, in order to reform them, it is a praiseworthy act. It is done in imitation of Our Lord. For, we read in Matt. ix. 11, "The scribes and Pharisees said to his disciples: why doth your Master eat with publicans and sinners?" The Gloss observes, that Christ, by so doing, "gave to His disciples an example of mercy." But, if sinners do not esteem it a favour, that the preachers of the Gospel should consort with them, the fault lies with them, not with the preachers.

12. If they who preach the Word, accept from their hearers the necessaries of life, they do not sell the

Gospel. For, as we have already said, material gain is not their primary motive in preaching. The Gloss on the words: "let the priests that rule well" (1 Tim. v.), remarks: "Good and faithful dispensers of the Word ought not to attain to heavenly glory only, but likewise to earthly honour, that so, they may not have cause for sadness." Again, "Alms are given from charity, and accepted through necessity. Nevertheless the Gospel is not venal. It is not preached in exchange for earthly goods. They who proclaim it, do so for the sake of eternal happiness. For, were they to sell so great a treasure, they would show that they held it in contempt. Let preachers then, accept from the people as a necessity the means of existence, and let them receive from the Lord the reward of their labours. For they do not regard the alms of the faithful as a recompense or a motive for their work. Their ministry is one of love. They accept what is given them as a stipend, whereby they may procure the supplies which are necessary to enable them to continue their labours."

13. Although there might have been some appearance of evil in the conduct of the Apostles, if they had taken alms from the Gentiles, to whom they preached the Faith, and if they had thereby introduced a new custom; it cannot now be considered disedifying, if preachers accept alms from the faithful. For this custom is sanctioned by the Gospel; and they to whom charity is given, need it, not for superfluities, but for the necessaries of life. It is evident, also, that religious do not preach for the sake of gain: for the alms that they receive, are far inferior in amount, to the worldly possessions which they renounced for the love of Christ.

We will next reply, one by one, to the arguments

brought to show, that alms ought not to be given to religious.

1. The words: "call the poor, from whom you have at present nothing to expect," mean only, that in giving alms the intention of receiving reward must not be present to the mind, though they may receive it in the future. For there is no one so poor, that he may not, in some case of emergency, be of use to us. This is made clear by the following words of the Gloss: "If thou dost invite others, in order, thyself, to be invited, thou mayest deceive thyself." Neither are we to understand, that there will be no eternal reward for such as call together rich men, or their own kinsfolk; for such an invitation may proceed from charity, and may be given for the love of God. Hence, the Gloss says: "They who invite the poor expect a future recompense; they who call together their friends and brethren, or wealthy people, have their reward now. But, if, like the sons of Job, they entertain rich persons, for the love of God, then He who commands us to practise brotherly love, will reward such hospitality, equally with other works of charity." But we are not to conclude, that it is a sin to entertain our kinsfolk, even from mere natural affection; but only that such hospitality does not deserve an everlasting recompense. The Gloss remarks: "Our Lord does not forbid us to call together our wealthy friends, and our kinsmen, as if it were criminal to do so. He only tells us, that such an invitation, will not be rewarded with eternal life."

2. The saying of St. Augustine, adduced in the second objection, is to be understood in the same sense as that of Ecclesiast. (xii. 4), "Give to the merciful and uphold not the sinners." The Gloss observes on this text: "Do not encourage sinners in their sinful ways;

do not hold communication with such; as they do who entertain actors, and suffer the poor of Christ to hunger." But, he who gives to a sinner who is in want, not in order to encourage him in sin, but because he beholds in him a man, assists not a sinner, but a just man; because he loves, not the sinner, but human nature. It is better, however, to withhold an alms, than to give it to a man, because he is a sinner, or in order to cause him to sin. But it does not follow, that we may not bestow charity on the poor of Christ who do no manual work. For, as we have already shown, they commit no sin by omitting to perform such labour. And, even were their omission criminal, we should not be assisting them because they were sinners, but because they were in distress.

3. He who asks in an unbecoming manner, should not obtain that which he demands; he should, rather, be corrected. But, he who begs befittingly, should, if possible, receive that for which he asks. Hence St. Gregory, XXI. *Moral.*, says, on the words of Job: "If I have denied to the poor what they desired," that "the holy man, in this saying, bears testimony to himself, that he not only assisted the poor in their needs, but condescended to their desires. But what is to be done, when the poor ask for things that are not expedient for them to have? Or, since in Holy Scripture, the poor are spoken of as being humble, are we to consider, that they ought to have only those things, for which they ask with humility? It is certain, that we ought to give them those things that they beg humbly for, *i.e.*, that they ask for out of necessity, not out of covetousness. For, it would be great pride, if they were to beg for what is unsuited to their condition of poverty." We should, therefore, unhesitatingly, assist

the poor in their necessities; and we should rebuke those who ask for superfluities.

4. As it is said in the fourth objection we must refuse alms, when, by giving them, we should encourage the recipients to commit injustice; but we should not refuse such assistance in cases of extreme necessity. But, as mendicant religious ask for alms, not for criminal purposes, but for the furtherance of their sacred labours, this proposition does not apply to them.

5. St. Ambrose does not say, in the words referred to, that infirmity of health, or the shame experienced by those who beg, are to be considered as reasons for giving alms. We give alms, on account of the need of those who ask for them. What St. Ambrose says, is, that we should give more abundantly, to those who are sick, and to those who are ashamed of begging. He does not say that we are not to give to those who are in good health, and to those who are not ashamed to beg; but that, other things being equal, the sick and retiring are, especially, deserving of our charity. But, sickness and reluctance to beg, are not the only conditions which should excite our charity. We must also consider the reputation of him that asks us, his claims upon us, his needs, etc. It is not only those who have lost their fortune by accident, who feel ashamed to beg. Religious, who have voluntarily renounced all things for the love of God, experience the same reluctance. For, they often belong to noble families; and shame at begging, is, therefore, natural to them. But, in religious, this natural shame, like other passions, is perhaps more fully subject to reason, than is the case with laymen.

6. Although there may be many reasons for giving

more abundant alms to one man than to another, we cannot conclude, for any one reason, that one man always deserves more assistance than others. Thus, the fact that a man is in greater need than are others, is not, always, a reason why he should be helped more than others. For, a man in less distressed circumstances, might be able to show cause, why he should receive more assistance from us, than a neighbour poorer than he. Aristotle teaches (*Ethics* IX.), that the preponderating reason for relieving another, is his claim upon us. For, except under very peculiar circumstances, we are more strictly bound to pay a debt, than to give a favour. Now, as we owe to preachers the necessaries of life as a stipend for their labours, we are bound, in a special manner, to bestow our alms upon them, especially when they are in distress. This is a debt of justice. This we ought, therefore, to pay, unless there be many grave reasons to prevent our so doing.

7. In reply to the seventh difficulty we must say that there are two sorts of happiness, spiritual and material. There are, likewise, two kinds of misery, spiritual and material. Religious, who have made themselves voluntarily poor, have not to suffer spiritual misery, which is absolute misery. Nay, Our Lord calls them "blessed" (*Matt. v.* and *Luke vi.*). They are, however, subject to physical distress; and are, therefore, worthy objects of material relief.

8. Kinship is one reason for giving alms more abundantly in some cases than in others. It is not, however, the only standard whereby our charity is to be proportioned. Therefore, it does not follow, as we have already said, that we are always to give most assistance to those most nearly related to us.

CHAPTER VIII

SHOWING HOW RELIGIOUS ARE ATTACKED BY THEIR ENEMIES FOR MANY FRIVOLOUS REASONS. THE POVERTY OF THE RELIGIOUS HABIT IS THE FIRST POINT ON WHICH THEY ARE ASSAILED[1]

We will now proceed to refute the malicious accusations brought against religious. These are inspired by the presumption of their enemies. We may, in this connection, aptly quote the words of St. Gregory (V. *Moral.*), "No one would presume to correct the faults of the Saints, unless he entertained a better opinion of himself than of them." St. Jerome, likewise, says to Sabinianus: "Lest thou shouldest find thyself solitary in evildoing, thou dost pretend, that the servants of God have, also, committed crimes. Thou knowest not, that thou speakest iniquity against another, and dost open thy mouth against Heaven. It is no wonder that some servants of God are blasphemed by thee, since thine ancestors have called their father Beelzebub." The calumniators of religious, being determined that nothing shall be wanting to fill the measure of their malice, pervert their judgment in a twofold manner. They pass unjust condemnation both on persons and on things. This double perversity of judgment is recog-

[1] This and the remaining chapters of the treatise form the third part of St. Thomas's apology for the Religious Orders. In them, as will be seen, he repeats the further objections of William of St. Amour against the religious; he then proceeds to refute them.—Editor.

nised by the Gloss, in the commentary on the text, "Judge not before the time" (1 *Cor. iv.*). On these words, the Gloss says: "We must beware lest we be deceived by a false opinion. We cannot know the consciences of men, nor have true and certain knowledge of this affair; nor can we be sure whether such or such a man be moral or immoral, whether he be just or unjust. Let us, ourselves, abhor immorality and injustice, and love justice and morality. We know, in the truth of God, that some things are to be desired, and that others avoided. Let us, then, desire those things that we ought to desire, and avoid those things that we ought to avoid; in order that we may be forgiven, if, at times, or even often, we do not pass a true judgment upon men." But, as, according to the Gloss, it is worse to entertain a false opinion about things, than about men, let us attack the greater evil in the first place, and consider how the enemies of religious pervert their judgment as to facts. We will then consider their false opinions about persons.

The assailants of religious pervert their judgment about facts in two ways. They first of all declare that the good, manifestly wrought by religious, is evil. Thus, they fulfil the words of Ecclesiasticus (*xi.* 33), "he lieth in wait, and turneth good into evil; and on the elect he will lay a blot." Then they pretend that the indifferent actions of religious are wrong. Now, by condemning the good works of religious as evil, they pass judgment on themselves; and they prove that those whom they blame are highly to be commended. They condemn religious, because their virtuous lives are offensive to them. St. Gregory, speaking of men of this description, says (VI. *Moral.*), "The wicked man detracts from the reputation of the just; and he never

ceases to condemn, and to blame, the good actions, which he himself neglects to perform." Detractors of religious, by blaming them, give the best proof of their innocence. They imitate the princes of Daniel, who said, in their malice, against that prophet, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, unless perhaps concerning the law of his God." On these words, the Gloss observes: "O spotless life, wherein his enemies could detect no guilt, save in the law which he observed." Now, the only ground of detraction which their enemies can find against religious, and the only reason for holding them up to contempt, is the law of God, to which they are faithful.

1. They blame them on account of the poor habit which they wear.

2. They condemn them for their charity to others, and for compassionately assisting their neighbours in the management of their affairs.

3. They complain that religious, who have here no abiding city, wander from city to city, to preach the Word of God.

4. They find fault with them for studying.

5. They blame them for preaching in a systematic and fluent style.

Now, by thus condemning religious, their assailants show that they despise their poverty, their mendicancy, and their teaching, and that they are opposed to the good fruit, which, by episcopal permission, they are enabled to produce in souls.

I. Their arguments are, first, directed against the religious custom of wearing a poor habit.

(1) They quote the words of Our Lord, "Beware of false prophets who come to you in the clothing of sheep," etc. (*Matt. vii.* 15). This warning, they apply

to those who wear poor raiment; and, hence, they seek to prove that religious ought to be suspected of being false prophets.

(2) The Gloss on the words, "Behold a pale horse" (*Apoc. vi.*), comments as follows: "The devil, finding that he cannot further his schemes against the Church, either by persecution, or by open heresy, sends forth false brethren, who, under the disguise of the religious habit, possess the nature of roan and black horses, and pervert the faith."

(3) It is said, again, that, in the early days of the Church, an order was sent from Rome to the Bishops of Gaul, commanding them to rebuke such as, under a pretext of humility, chose to wear contemptible garments, unlike the ordinary dress of the time. This decree is said to be preserved in the register of the Roman Church; although there are no traces of it in the body of the decretals. This alleged Papal command is held to be a proof, that men, at least those who live in the world, are not justified in wearing garments unfitted to their station.

(4) St. Augustine says, (Bk. III. *De doctrina Christiana*), "Whosoever makes a more limited use of temporal things than is customary with those among whom he lives, is guilty, either of superstition or of indiscretion." Hence, he who wears raiment, meaner than that worn by those around him, is deserving of blame.

(5) St. Jerome, writing to Nepotianus, says: "Wear neither sad-coloured, nor white garments. Sumptuous apparel, and slovenly dress, are, equally, to be avoided. For, the one denotes luxury, and the other vain glory." Hence, we see, the error of dressing in a beggarly fashion.

(6) St. Paul says (*Rom. xiv.* 17), "The Kingdom of

God is not meat and drink." On these words, the Gloss observes: "It matters little of what quality our food may be, or what quantity we may consume, so long as our nourishment be adapted to the condition of those with whom we live and of our own, and to the requirements of our health." For the same reason, the fashion of a man's clothing has no connection with virtue, provided that he wear what is becoming to his condition. Hence, it is no mark of a truly religious man, to wear a mean dress as a sign of contempt of the world.

(7) Hypocrisy would seem to be the worst of all sins. For, Our Lord inveighed more forcibly against hypocrites, than against any other class of sinner. St. Gregory says (in *Pastoral*), "None do more harm in the Church, than sinners who have a reputation for, or appearance of, sanctity." Hypocrisy lurks under shabby raiment; just as costliness of attire betokens luxury, or stimulates men to pride. It is more sinful, therefore, to exceed the limits of discretion by poverty of attire, than by gaudiness of apparel.

(8) Our Lord Jesus Christ gave us an example of the perfection of holiness and of religion. But, He wore a precious garment, to wit, a coat woven throughout (*John xix.* 23). It must, therefore, have been made, as clothes are wont to be sewn, with silk and gold. The fact that the soldiers would not divide it, but cast lots for it, is a proof that it must have been costly. Hence, wearing mean raiment can be no part of religion.

(9) The Sovereign Pontiff wears costly silken robes; the kings of old were clad in scarlet; and it would not have been praiseworthy in them had they worn contemptible garments. For the same reason, it is not

meritorious on the part of anyone, to wear garments unbecoming his station; nay, the shabbiness of his clothing brings humility into disrepute.

We will now expose the fallacy contained in the foregoing arguments.

(1.) We read (XXI. *Quaest.* IX.), "All extravagance or ornateness of attire is unbecoming Holy Orders. Therefore, it behoves all bishops or ecclesiastics who attire themselves in costly or showy garments, to amend; for, if they persist in so doing, a penalty will be laid upon them." It is added later on, "And if any should be found to ridicule those who wear poor and religious garments, let him do penance." In the early ages of the Church, every man consecrated to God wore coarse and common clothing. For, as St. Basil says, all that is worn, not out of necessity, but for the sake of adornment, is accounted as pride. Hence, plainness of attire is to be encouraged; all ostentation is to be avoided; and they who speak ill of men who wear poor garments, are to be severely punished.

(2.) We are confirmed in this by the example of St. John, who wore a garment made of camel's hair (*Matt. ii.*). The Gloss, hereon, observes, that "he who preached penance, wore a garment of penance; and that such poverty of apparel was as praiseworthy in him, as it would have been unseemly in a wealthy man." Another commentary says that, "a servant of God ought to use clothing, not for pleasure or adornment, but for the purpose of necessary covering." The Gloss also observes on St. Mark i., that the Baptist's garment of camel's hair, was the raiment befitting preachers. Hence, we learn, that the servants of God, especially such as preach penance, ought to wear the garb of humility.

(3.) We are told, once more, (*Heb. xi.*), that the prophets of old, such as Elias and others, "wandered about in sheep's skins, in goat skins." The word *melota* is used indiscriminately for undressed sheep skin, or goat skin; and it signifies, consequently, a very rough and harsh covering for the body. The Gloss says, that the same word is used for camel's hair.

(4.) We are told of SS. Hilarion, Arsenius, and of other Fathers of the desert, that they wore the very coarsest clothing.

(5.) We read the following words in the Apocalypse (*ii.* 3), "I will give unto my two witnesses; and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." This, the Gloss interprets to mean: "they shall preach penance both by word and example." Another commentary remarks, on the same text, "You ought, in preaching, to follow their example." From which we must understand, that they who preach penance, ought to wear a penitential garment.

(6.) St. Gregory, in his homily on the text, "There was a certain rich man," strongly inculcates the lesson, that poverty of clothing is as much to be commended, as extravagance of apparel is to be condemned. We will quote his words: "Some men consider, that there is no sin in excessive daintiness and magnificence of attire. But, if such were the case, the Word of God would not expressly tell us that the rich man who was tormented in hell, had worn purple and fine linen. No one dresses in an ostentatious manner, save for the sake of vain glory, and in order to outdo others in splendour. For, the very fact, that a man does not deck himself out when there is none to see him, proves, that he wears his fine garments from motives

of vain glory. We shall see, more clearly, the fault committed by extravagance of dress, if we compare it with the virtue of humility, displayed in mean apparel. For, were it not a virtue to wear contemptible garments, the Evangelist would not have expressly told us, that the clothing of St. John the Baptist was of camel's hair."

(7.) On the words of St. Peter (1*st Ep. iii.* 3), "Whose adorning let it not be outward plaiting of the hair," etc., the Gloss makes the following commentary. "As St. Cyprian says, they who are clad in silk and scarlet, cannot put on Christ. They who are adorned with gold and pearls, and such-like gauds, have lost the ornament of heart and of body. If the women, whom St. Peter admonishes, in the text we have quoted, were married women, who might have alleged their husbands as an excuse for their vanity in dress, how much more ought virgins, who have no such excuse, to take to heart the warning of the Apostle?" It is clear therefore that in ecclesiastics, sumptuousness of apparel is far more to be deprecated, than it is in women.

(8.) An outward act which reveals the virtue of the heart, is, even though liable to abuse, very commendable. Poverty of clothing comes into this category. Thus, St. Jerome, writing to the monk Rusticus, says: "A lowly garb betokens a noble mind. A coarse tunic denotes contempt of the world, provided that the soul of one thus clad, be not puffed up with pride, and that his words be not inconsistent with his garment." Hence, the habit of wearing coarse clothes, is, in itself, one to be adopted, if, at the same time, pride be banished from the heart.

(9.) That which wins the Divine mercy, cannot be

wrong. Now, many, even great sinners, have, by assuming a garb of penance, gained the mercy of heaven. We are told of the impious Achab (3 *Kings xxi.* 27), that, "when he had heard these words (*i.e.* of Elias), he rent his garments, and put haircloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and slept in sackcloth. And the word of the Lord came to Elias the Thesbite, saying: Hast thou not seen Achab humbled before me? Therefore, because he hath humbled himself for my sake, I will not bring the evil in his days." Nevertheless, the humility of Achab was not, as the Gloss says, true humility of heart. Again, in the third chapter of the book of Jonas we read: "The word came to the king of Ninive; and he rose up out of his throne, and cast away his robe from him, and was clothed with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." He also ordered all his subjects to do likewise. Hence, we see, that humility of raiment is acceptable to God.

(10.) Aristotle (10 *Ethic*) proves, that, "virtue consists not only in interior, but, likewise, in exterior acts." He is, here, speaking of the moral virtues. Now, humility is, in a certain sense, a moral virtue; for it belongs, neither to the intellectual, nor to the theological virtues. Hence, it consists, not merely in interior, but, likewise, in exterior acts. As self-contempt pertains to humility, it follows that it is consistent with humility, for a man to render himself exteriorly contemptible.

(11.) Evil is never disguised, save under an appearance of good. Now, hypocrites cloak their malice under a guise of humility. Hence, a humble garb has, in itself, an appearance of good; and, therefore, in itself it is commendable, although it be liable to abuse.

(12.) As fasting and almsdeeds are praiseworthy

exercises of penance, so the habit of wearing a contemptible dress is, likewise, a commendable custom, although some may make a bad use of it. From all that we have said, whilst admitting the possibility of its abuse, we maintain that, in itself, the wearing of a humble dress is praiseworthy, as being an act of penitence and humility practised by some, who, by their station in life, have a right to costly raiment; just as many have the laudable habit of fasting and abstaining, who might, according to their condition, make use of flesh meat. But, both fasting and wearing a contemptible raiment, may, for some exceptional reason, be evil, if, for instance, it is practised in a manner annoying to those with whom we live, or, if it is done from motives of vain glory. The same remark applies to prayer and to almsdeeds, as Our Lord himself teaches (*Matt. vi.*).

II. We will now reply to the other objections, alleged against the religious habit.

(1.) The fact that false prophets make use of sheep's clothing to deceive the faithful, is rather in favour of the habit of wearing poor clothing, than against it. For, hypocrites would not thus disguise their malice, unless a contemptible garb carried with it an appearance of good. Otherwise, the Scriptures, of which as we are told (2 *Pet. iii.*), that heretics make a bad use, ought to be reprobated. The same might be said of piety to which heretics often pretend (2 *Tim. iii.*). Hence, the Gloss says, on St. Matt. vii., that false prophets are recognised, not by their garments, but by their works. Again, the Gloss adds, that sheep should not lay aside their clothing, even though, at times, wolves may assume it as a disguise.

(2.) The devil would not clothe his emissaries in a religious habit, if this habit were not, in itself, a token

of goodness. But, this is no reason why virtuous persons should not wear the religious habit; nor is it a reason why all that wear it, should be accounted wicked (see Gloss on St. Matt. vii.). Hence, St. Jerome asks in his book against Helvidius, "Does the fact that it is sinful to pretend to be a virgin, make virginity itself a crime?"

(3.) The prohibition, quoted in this objection, was not published because poverty of raiment is in itself reprehensible, but because it is assumed by some men for the purposes of deception.

(4.) The quotation of St. Augustine, cited in this objection, applies, only, to such rigour of life as causes dissension amongst those with whom we have to live. For, if it be understood absolutely, everyone who fasts when others do not fast, would deserve blame. This idea is, of course, absurd.

(5.) The words here quoted from St. Jerome, apply, not to the use, but to the abuse, of a poor and lowly garb. He utters a warning against the vain glory, which may arise from such a custom. In his epistles to the monk Rusticus, and to the nobleman Pammachius, he commends poverty and humility of raiment. This is evident from his epistle to Pammachius on the death of Paulina.

(6.) The use of exterior things may be regarded from a double point of view. Their use is indifferent, if we consider the nature of the things themselves. If, however, we regard the end for which we use them, their use is commendable, in proportion to the excellence of that end. For example, fasting, practised as a means of overcoming lust, is more commendable, than the eating of ordinary food with giving of thanks. Jovinian denied this proposition; but he was refuted,

in this and in his other errors, by St. Jerome. Hence, poverty of clothing, when it is intended as humiliation for the soul, and as a conquest over the body, is, in itself, more to be commended than ordinary raiment. Consequently as religion is evidenced by fasting, so, on the same grounds, is it seen in humility of attire.

(7.) The fact that the assumption of poor garments, for hypocritical purposes, is a great sin, does not prove that poverty of apparel, is, itself, more sinful, than extravagance of attire. For, poverty of clothing is not as closely connected with hypocrisy, as splendour of attire is related to pride and luxury. Ostentation in dress, leads, of itself, and directly, to pride and luxury. It is, therefore, in itself, culpable. But, meanness of attire, does not, of itself, directly, tend to hypocrisy. Hypocrisy results from the abuse of a humble fashion of dress; just as it may result from the abuse of any other good work. Now, the more excellent a work is, the more reprehensible is its abuse. Therefore, the heinousness of hypocrisy is a testimony in favour of poverty of apparel, and of the other external penitential works, of which hypocrisy is the abuse. We do not mean, however, that hypocrisy is, absolutely speaking, the greatest of sins. For, unbelief, whereby a man lies against God, is a more heinous crime than dissimulation, whereby he lies against himself.

(8.) It is not credible that Our Lord Jesus Christ should have been clad in costly raiment. For He commended St. John in that he was not clothed in soft garments. The Pharisees laid great stress on exterior sanctity. They accused Christ Himself of being a glutton, a wine bibber, and a friend of publicans; so would they have accused the Baptist had he worn soft garments. The soldiers who mocked Our

Lord, would not have clothed Him in a purple garment, as a mark of sovereignty, if His own tunic had been woven with silk and gold. The soldiers who cast lots for His seamless coat, did so, not because it was of costly material, but for the sake of their own profit. For, had it been divided, it would have been of no use to any of them. This alone suffices to prove, that His garment was not valuable. Had it been of rich material, they would have divided it. But, as the Gloss says, Our Lord's seamless coat was a figure of the unity of the Church.

(9.) Certain stations in life have a dress proper to them; just as each religious order has its own habit. The robes of the Kings of old, and of the Sovereign Pontiff at the present time, must be considered as the insignia of their office. And, just as a religious has no right to wear a meaner habit than the one belonging to his order, (though it is praiseworthy in him to wear the poorest allowed by the statutes of his rule), so, neither would it have been lawful for monarchs of former days, nor for the Sovereign Pontiff in these times, to wear apparel unbecoming their dignity. But, the case is different with regard to princes and other men, who have no fixed robes of state. It is not reprehensible in them, if they wear the poorest garments compatible with their station. Michol cried out, in mockery of David, (2 *Kings vi.* 20), "How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and he was naked as if one of the buffoons should be naked. And David answered: I will both play, and will make myself meaner than I have done; and I will be little in my own eyes." Again, Esther, speaking to the Almighty, said, (*Esther xiv.* 16), "Thou knowest my

necessity, that I abominate the sign of my pride and glory, which is upon my head in the days of my public appearance; and I wear it not in the days of my silence." Hence, we see, that it is praiseworthy, even in kings and princes, if, when they can do so without scandal, or without detriment to their authority, they are content with humble apparel.

CHAPTER IX

THE ATTACKS BROUGHT AGAINST RELIGIOUS ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR WORKS OF CHARITY

As religious are charged with meddling in other people's concerns, we will now consider the grounds on which these accusations are based.

1. The following words of St. Paul are quoted, "that you use your endeavour to be quiet, and that you do your own business" (1 *Thess. iv.* 11). They also cite the commentary of the Gloss, "leaving the affairs of other people alone, as is profitable for the amendment of your own life."

2. St. Paul says, "we have heard that there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling" (2 *Thess. iii.* 11). On this passage, the Gloss remarks, "Do men who act thus, contrary to the law of the Lord, deserve to be supported by the alms of others?"

3. "No man being a soldier to God, entangleth himself with secular business" (2 *Tim. ii.*), "of any kind whatsoever," adds the Gloss. Now, as the affairs of other people are frequently of a worldly nature, it is maintained, that religious ought never to concern themselves with the business of their neighbours.

This opinion is directly opposed to the teaching of St. James, who says: "Now religion pure and undefiled, before God and the Father, is this: to visit the orphans

and the widow in their tribulation," (*Ep. i.* 22), *i.e.* "to succour those who are in distress and have no other assistance," as the Gloss explains.

"I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, that you assist her, in whatsoever business she shall have need of you" (*Rom. xvi.* 1). The Gloss says, that the Apostle here speaks of a woman who had gone to Rome on some business. He commends her to the care of the Romans. "Bear ye one another's burdens, for so you shall fulfil the law of Christ," St. Paul also writes to the Galatians (vi. 2).

These words, all prove, that it is commendable in a man to be as anxious about his neighbour's interests, as if they were his own. Nevertheless, two faults are to be avoided in the exercise of this fraternal charity. We must beware of being so occupied about other people's affairs, as to neglect our own. St. Paul warns us against this error, saying, "Use your endeavour to be quiet," *i.e.* free from curiosity (Gloss), and "do your own business," (1 *Thess. iv.*), "leaving other people's alone" (Gloss). We are, here, commanded to mind our own concerns, rather than those of our neighbours. St. Paul, also, warns us (2 *Thess. iii.*) against helping others in any illicit proceedings, or assisting them from an unlawful motive. Hence the Gloss says on the words "curiously meddling": "Do men who thus act, contrary to the law of the Lord, deserve to be supported by the alms of others? For, their God is their belly, and, with unworthy solicitude, they seek to provide themselves with the necessaries of life." Their iniquitous motive is proved, by the fact, that they desire only their own material advantage. That they seek, with reprehensible anxiety, to procure such advantage, proves, that they become engaged in some

unlawful business. This is our answer to the two first accusations brought against religious who assist their neighbour.

To the third charge we answer, that, according to the explanation of the Gloss, those occupations are to be called secular, in which men are engaged in making money, but not by manual labour. To this class belong all mercantile pursuits. Religious are forbidden to involve themselves in any business of this description. They may not, for instance, trade in another man's interest. There is no reason, however, against their performing charitable offices for their neighbours, such as giving him advice, or interceding for him.

CHAPTER X

HOW RELIGIOUS ARE ATTACKED ON ACCOUNT OF THE JOURNEYS WHICH THEY UNDERTAKE FOR THE SALVATION OF SOULS

We will, in this chapter, consider the charges brought against religious on account of their journeying.

1. St. Paul says (2 *Thess. iii.* 11), "We have heard that there are some among you that walk disorderly." On account of this text, religious who travel, are called by their enemies wanderers (*gyrovagi*).

2. The following words of St. Augustine, are, likewise, quoted against them, "Some monks," he says, "bear no commission; yet they are never quiet, never settled, never at rest" (*De oper. Monach.*).

3. On the words, "Wheresoever you shall enter into a house, there abide" (*Mark vi.* 10), the Gloss says: "It is not becoming in a preacher, to run from house to house, and to change the place wherein he enjoys hospitality."

4. The following words of Isaias, (*xxx.* 7), are quoted in the same sense: "Therefore, have I cried concerning this: It is pride; only sit still," *i.e.* "abide in thine own land" (Gloss).

5. Again, we read in the Prophet Jeremias (*xiv.* 10): "This people have loved to move their feet, they have not rested, and have not pleased the Lord."

This accusation of restlessness, brought against

preachers, is nothing new. For Dionysius, in his epistle to Apolophanius, says, that, when he was still a Gentile, he used to call St. Paul a wanderer round the world, because he obeyed the command of Our Lord: "going therefore into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature" (*Mark xvi.* 15).

1. In the Gospel of St. John (xv. 16), we, also, read, that Christ said to His disciples: "I have chosen you that you should go, and should bring forth fruit."

2. The journeyings of preachers are symbolised by the words in Job, (*xxxvii.* 11), "The clouds spread their light; they go round about, whithersoever the will of Him that governeth them shall lead them, to whatsoever he shall command them upon the face of the whole earth." The Gloss hereon observes: "The clouds that spread their light, typify holy preachers, who, by word and deed, propagate the example of a good life, and who illuminate all around them, because, by their preaching, they enlighten the ends of the earth."

3. Again the words in Job (*xxxviii.* 25), "who gave a course to violent showers?" is interpreted, by the Gloss and by St. Gregory, (*Moral.*), of the journeys of preachers.

4. We read (*Zach. vi.* 7), "they that were most strong went out, and sought to go, and went to and fro through all the earth." The Gloss again understands these words to refer to the Apostles, and to other preachers.

5. St. Paul says (*Rom. xvi.*), "Salute them that are of Narcissus' household." The Gloss remarks, that, this Narcissus is said, in other *codices*, to have been a priest who journeyed about, in order to confirm the brethren in the faith.

6. "When they shall rush in unto Jacob" (*i.e.*, "to preach," says the Gloss), "they shall fill the face of the world with seed" (*Isa. xxvii.* 6), *i.e.* "the seed of preaching" (Gloss).

7. In the Book of Proverbs (vi. 3), we find the words: "Run about, make haste, stir up thy friend" (*i.e.* "from the sleep of sin," Gloss). Now, sinners are awakened by preaching. Therefore, journeys undertaken by preachers for the salvation of souls, are praiseworthy.

8. "This was the vision running to and fro in the midst of the living creatures" (*Ezek. i.* 13). St. Gregory writes (in *homil. V.* I. *part super Ezech.*): "They who are the pastors of souls, and who have undertaken the duty of feeding their flock, ought but rarely to change their place of abode. But, they who journey abroad to preach, are as wheels of fire, which move from place to place, by the force of the flame of that holy desire which both consumes the preacher, and inflames his hearers." This passage teaches us two lessons, viz. that it is permissible for others, besides prelates, to preach; and, that preachers ought to move from place to place, instead of remaining always in one spot.

9. St. Gregory, in the same homily, commenting on the words of Ezek. i., "When they walked it was like the voice of a multitude, like the noise of an army," says, "The camps of preachers move from one place to another, labouring for the salvation of souls." We see, therefore, from all the passages that have been cited, that the journeys undertaken by preachers, in their zeal for souls, are highly to be commended.

But, we must note, that the Holy Scripture blames three classes of men who wander about. The first

class consists of those, whose restless and changeable disposition causes them to roam hither and thither, and whose journeys produce no fruit. The second class is composed of those who travel about in hopes of material profit. The third class is formed of those whose journeys are undertaken from some evil motive, and to accomplish some sinful end. Of all these three orders of men, St. Jude writes: "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and after the error of Balaam, they have for reward poured out themselves. These are spots in their banquets, feasting together without fear, feeding themselves, clouds without water which are carried about by winds, trees of the autumn, unfruitful" (Epist. i. 11). By these words is typified the unfruitfulness of journeys which are undertaken through frivolous motives. The Apostle blames the men, of whom we have been speaking, for the levity, or inordinate desires, which cause them to travel abroad. The Gloss says, that the words of St. Jude refer to such as seek food, by unworthy means, or inquisitive disquiet.

2. St. Augustine, when he speaks of monks, who, although they bear no commission, are never settled, never quiet, means that their journeys are undertaken from frivolous or avaricious motives. This is clear by the context, wherein he blames them for running about in quest of lucre.

3. The words quoted from St. Mark vi. and St. Luke x. plainly allude to men, whose inordinate desires induce them to run from house to house, in hopes of being supplied more abundantly with food, by one family, than by another.

4. The text of Isaias (xxx.), warns us against that inconstancy of mind, which tempts the man whose

soul rests not in God, to flit from one object to another, finding rest in none. The words, in their literal sense, refer to the Jews, who, not satisfied with the Divine assistance accorded to them, desired to go down into Egypt, to seek protection from the Egyptians. The words quoted from Jeremias are, likewise, a warning against that love of wandering about which arises from lightness of mind. This appears by the context, "This people have loved to move their feet." For, they who move easily, delight in motion. And the Gloss, in this passage, explains the movement of the feet to mean, movement of the affections.

CHAPTER XI

THE ATTACKS MADE ON RELIGIOUS BECAUSE THEY STUDY

We now proceed to consider the objections brought against the studious life led by religious.

1. We find (2 *Tim. iii.* 7) certain persons, who were a danger to the Church, accused of "ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth." For this reason, it is considered a suspicious circumstance, when religious are fond of study.

2. St. Gregory makes the following remarks on the words of Job xvi., "my enemy hath beheld me with terrible eyes": "The Incarnate Truth," he writes (in his 13th book, *Moral.*), "chose for His preachers such as were poor, simple, and unlearned. But, on the other hand, the astute and double-tongued man, filled with the knowledge of this world, whom at the end of time the Apostate Angel will elect to propagate his falsehood, will be damned." Hence, religious, because they exercise the office of preaching in a learned manner, are regarded as the forerunners of Antichrist.

3. "I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb" (*Apoc. xiii.* 11). On these words of the Apocalypse the Gloss remarks: "The description of the tribulation which will be caused by Antichrist and his princes, is followed by a narrative of the evils which will befall the Church, by means of

the apostles of Antichrist, who will travel throughout the entire world." Again, "Coming up out of the earth" signifies "going forth to preach" (Gloss). On the words "it had two horns" the Gloss remarks: "These preachers are said to have two horns, because they will profess to imitate the innocent and spotless life of Our Lord, to work miracles resembling His, and to preach His doctrine; or else because they will usurp to themselves the two Testaments." Hence, it would appear, that they who go forth to preach, with the knowledge of the two Testaments, and with an appearance of sanctity, are the apostles of Antichrist.

4. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" (1 *Cor. viii.* 1). Now, as religious are, in a peculiar manner, bound to the practice of humility, they ought to abstain from knowledge.

5. Of St. Benedict, patriarch of religious, we are told, that, "he withdrew from the study of literature; and, that his learning was unlearned, and his wisdom untaught" (*St. Greg.* II. *Moral.*). Hence, after his example, religious should desist from study.

6. St. Paul (2 *Thess. iii.*), reproves those who neglected manual labour, and indulged themselves in curiosity and sloth. As, then, the acquisition of knowledge is curiosity, religious ought not to abandon manual labour, for the sake of study.

Now those who have been quoted above are not the originators of the error we are refuting. Julian the Apostate was the first to conceive this idea. He, as we are told in Ecclesiastical history, forcibly prevented Christians from acquiring knowledge. Those, therefore, who imitate him, by forbidding religious to study, act in a manner opposed to the precepts of Scripture. We read, for instance, in Isaias (v. 13): "Therefore is my

people led away captive, because they had not knowledge." "Because," remarks the Gloss, "they *would not* have knowledge." Now, voluntary ignorance could not deserve punishment, were not knowledge praiseworthy.

2. In the Prophet Osee (*iv.* 5) we read: "In the night I have made thy mother to be silent. My people have been silent, because they had no knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt not do the office of priesthood to me." This text clearly shows how severely ignorance will be punished.

3. In Ps. cxviii. 66, we read: "Teach me goodness, and discipline and knowledge." On these words, the Gloss says: "Teach me goodness, *i.e.* inspire me with charity; teach me discipline, *i.e.* give me patience; teach me knowledge, *i.e.* enlighten my mind. For that knowledge is useful, whereby a man becomes known to himself."

4. St. Jerome thus writes to the monk Rusticus: "Let a book be never absent from thine eyes or hand." Again, "Love the knowledge of the Scriptures, and thou wilt not love the vices of the flesh." The same saint, likewise, writes thus to the monk Paulinus: "Holy ignorance is only profitable to itself, and inasmuch as when accompanied by the example of a good life it edifies the Church of Christ. It is harmful, when it be powerless against such as impugn her doctrine." Hence, the learning of the saints is preferable, to the holiness of the unlearned. In the same epistle, after enumerating the books of holy Scripture, St. Jerome continues: "I beseech thee, brother, let these books be the companions of thy life, and the subject of thy meditation. Know nought but these, and seek no other thing. Seest thou not, that, thus, thou mayest

on earth enjoy the Kingdom of heaven?" A heavenly life, then, consists in the constant study of Holy Writ.

5. St. Paul points out, that the knowledge of the Scriptures is essential to preachers. For, he says, (1 *Tim. iv.* 13), "Till I come attend unto reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine." It is evident from this, that a knowledge of what they are to teach, is necessary for those whose duty it is to preach and to exhort.

6. St. Jerome writes to the monk Rusticus: "Spend much time in learning that which, hereafter, thou must teach." Once more he writes to the same, "If thou desirest to enter the clerical state, study, in order that thou mayest teach."

7. St. Gregory says, in his Pastorale: "It is eminently necessary that they who accept the office of preachers, should not desist from sacred study."

8. The life of religious is established primarily for contemplation; but, as Hugh of St. Victor says, reading is part of contemplation. Hence, religious have a right to apply themselves to study.

9. They are best capable of prosecuting their studies with success, who are least embarrassed by earthly ties. We read in Isaias (*xxviii.* 9), "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand the hearing? Them that are weaned from the milk, that are drawn away from the breasts." The Commentary says, (in VII. *Physic.*), that chastity and the other virtues, whereby the desires of the flesh are curbed, are special aids to the acquisition of speculative knowledge. Now, as religious consecrate themselves to a life of continence and abstinence, they are peculiarly fitted for study.

10. St. Jerome proves, moreover, in a letter to Pammachius the monk, that it is commendable in

religious to devote themselves, not only to sacred learning, but to secular study. "If," he says, "thou be enamoured of the spouse knowledge, whom thou hast taken captive, (that is to say if thy heart be enthralled by the beauty of secular knowledge), cut off the tresses of this maiden, and remove the ornaments from her head, whereby I mean, heed not, when thou dost study, the meretricious charms of language. Bathe thy spouse, learning, in the salt of prophetic wisdom; and, then, resting with her, speak saying: 'Her left hand is under my head, and with her right hand she will embrace me.' Then, shall this captive raise up around thee a numerous offspring, and this Moabitess shall become an Israelite in truth." Hence, we may understand, that it is permissible for religious to occupy themselves with secular branches of learning, if, according to the rule of Holy Scripture, they avoid all that may be reprehensible.

11. St. Augustine, (in 2 *De doctrina christiana*), says: "Those philosophers, especially of the Platonic School, whose teaching is true and consistent with the Faith, are not to be feared. On the contrary, we may make use of them, as we may despoil those who are in unjust possession of our property."

12. On the words, "Daniel purposed in his heart," (*Dan. i.*), the Gloss says: "He who would not eat at the king's table, lest he should, thereby, be defiled, would never have studied the science of the Egyptians, had he considered it to be sinful. He studied it, however, not in order to follow it, but to judge and confute it. Now, if a man, ignorant of mathematics, undertake to argue with a mathematician, or if one who knows nothing of philosophy enter the lists against philosophers, what does he do, save expose himself to ridicule?"

From all that has been said, we see, then, that it is advisable for religious, and especially for preachers, to be learned; and that, above all things, they ought to have a good knowledge of Holy Scripture.

We will now proceed to answer the arguments brought forward by those who condemn learning in religious.

1. The words, (2 *Tim. iii.*), "Ever learning, and never attaining to a knowledge of the truth," are a rebuke, not to such as are ever learning, but to those whose study withdraws them from the Faith, and who, therefore, never attain to the knowledge of the truth. Such men are "reprobates at heart, and blinded to the faith."

2. When St. Gregory says, that the preachers of Antichrist are learned in the knowledge of this world, he refers to those preachers who make use of earthly learning to draw their hearers to sin and to worldly desires. For, in the context to the words we have quoted, he cites the following verse of Isaias (*xviii.* 1): "Woe to the land, the winged cymbal, that sendeth ambassadors by the sea, and in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters." Upon these words, St. Gregory makes this comment: "Paper is made from the reed papyrus. What then shall we understand by the bulrushes, or reeds, whereof the prophet here speaks, save earthly learning? The vessels of bulrushes, then, are the hearts of worldly men; and to send ambassadors upon the waters in vessels of bulrushes, is to base our preaching on the arguments of carnal wisdom, and to attract our hearers to sin."

3. The words of the Gloss, quoted in the third objection, refer, (as may be plainly seen by comparing this passage with many others), to the preachers whom

Antichrist will, at his coming into the world, send forth. Neither is the fact that the knowledge of the Old and the New Testament may be abused, an argument against religious possessing such knowledge; unless we, likewise, say, that because they may make a hypocritical display of innocence and purity of life, these virtues are therefore to be reprobated.

4. To the objection, that "science puffeth up," we reply, that it certainly does so, unless it be accompanied by charity. Thus, the Gloss says: "Knowledge alone puffeth up"; and again: "add charity to your knowledge, and your knowledge will be useful." Hence, to such as practise works of mercy, learning will not be very dangerous. But, if we are to avoid knowledge because it leads to pride, we ought, on the same grounds, to desist from any good work. For, as St. Augustine says, "Pride insinuates itself into good actions, in order to render them worthless."

5. To the argument, founded on the example of St. Benedict, we reply that this Saint did not forego study from a dread of learning, but from fear of the effects of a worldly life and society. Thus, St. Gregory tells us, that, "being in Rome, St. Benedict applied himself to liberal studies, and to literature; but perceiving that many of those around him fell into sin, he withdrew the foot with which he had stepped out into the world, fearing, lest, if he attained to worldly learning, he might, likewise, fall into the abyss of sin." Therefore, they are worthy of all praise, who abandon the life of worldly students, and retire into a monastery, wherein they may prosecute their studies.

6. To the last objection proposed, we reply that idle and inordinate curiosity is a danger attendant, not only on study, but on all other mental occupation; and that

superfluous anxiety, which is engendered by curiosity, is reprehensible. But in the words of St. Paul (2 *Thess. iii.*), quoted as an argument against religious, the Apostle, as the Gloss points out, rebukes those men, who, from an undue desire for material gain, entangle themselves in their neighbours' concerns. To speak of study of Holy Scripture as a life of idleness, is flatly to contradict the Gloss. For, on the words of Ps. cxviii., "My eyes have fainted," the commentary says: "As he is not idle who only studies the word of God; neither can he who performs manual labour be more justly accused of sloth, than he who is occupied with the study of divinity. Such learning is the greatest of all work; and Mary, who listened to Our Lord, is preferred before Martha, who ministered to Him."

CHAPTER XII

ATTACKS BROUGHT AGAINST RELIGIOUS ON ACCOUNT OF THEIR SYSTEMATIC METHOD OF PREACHING

We will now proceed to examine the objections brought against religious, on the score of their methodical and carefully prepared manner of preaching.

1. St. Paul says, "not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void" (1 *Cor. i.* 17). This the Gloss understands to mean, "not with eloquence or tropes of language. For, the preaching of Christ needs not pompous words, lest it should proceed rather from the cunning of human wisdom, than from truth." It is, therefore, alleged, that, because religious preach with fluency and eloquence, they must be false apostles.

2. We read in the same Epistle to the Corinthians (*ii.* 1), "When I came to you, I came not in loftiness of speech," *i.e.*, says the Gloss, "I did not reason with you, nor use logical arguments. I displayed no wisdom. Neither did I, in my preaching, treat of the speculations of physical science." St. Paul continues, "My speech and preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom." The Gloss adds, "even though my words were convincing, their power was not, like those of false Apostles, due to human wisdom." Hence, we are to conclude, that religious who preach learnedly, must be false apostles.

3. St. Paul, again, writes: "For although I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge" (2 *Cor. xi.* 6). The Gloss remarks upon this passage, that the Apostle called himself "rude in speech," because he did not use flowery language. The commentary further adds, "The words, 'rude of speech,' apply, not to the Apostles, who were not eloquent, but to the false Apostles who knew how to combine choice phrases. But, on account of the accuracy of their language, the Corinthians preferred the impostors to the preachers of the truth. For, in religious matters, a power which convinces is needed, not a string of words."

4. We read in the Second Book of Esdras (*xiv.* 24, 25): "Their children spoke half in the speech of Azotus . . . they spoke according to the language of this and that people. And I chid them, and laid my curse upon them." The Gloss understands by "the language of Azotus," a rhetorical style of speech. Therefore, they who mingle rhetoric or philosophy with the words of Scripture, are worthy of excommunication.

5. Isaias says (*i.* 22): "Thy wine is mingled with water." Now, wine signifies the teaching of Holy Scripture. They, therefore, who mingle with this doctrine the water of human wisdom, are exceedingly reprehensible.

6. On the words of Isaias (xv. 1): "In the night, Ar of Moab is laid waste," the Gloss understands by "Ar of Moab," the "adversary of God, viz., human wisdom, whose walls are built up by means of reasoning, and which, in the night, is laid waste, and put to silence." From this comparison we may see how much they are to be blamed, who, in instruction on sacred subjects, employ earthly wisdom or eloquence.

7. We find in Proverbs vii., the following words:

"I have covered my bed with painted tapestry brought from Egypt." The Gloss thus comments on the text: "The painted tapestry from Egypt, is symbolical of flowery eloquence, or of cunning reasoning, derived from heathen sources. Heresy glories in adorning its pernicious doctrines with language of this description." Hence, we are to understand, how criminal a thing it is, to use eloquence and earthly learning, in expounding the faith.

8. St. Paul says to Timothy (1st Ep. iii. 7): "He (*i.e.*, a bishop) must have a good testimony of them who are without, lest he fall into reproach," "or," as the Gloss says, "lest he be despised, both by believers and by infidels." Now, if certain religious preach in a learned and eloquent style, bishops who cannot equal them, will be contemned by their people. Hence, learned and eloquent preaching, practised amongst religious, is a danger to the Church.

1. The foregoing arguments may be answered, by the following words of St. Jerome addressed to the great orator of Rome. "What cause hast thou to wonder," (the Saint asks), "that, at times, we, in our little writings, adduce examples drawn from the literature of the world? or that we sully the whiteness of the Church by the defilement of heathen authors? Thou wouldst cease to marvel at our acting thus wert thou not wholly possessed by Tully, and ignorant of the Scriptures, and of their Commentators, Volcatius excepted. Who does not know, that Moses and the prophets quote from the books of the Gentiles? and that Solomon makes use of the philosophers, citing some of their opinions, and refuting others?" St. Jerome then proceeds to show, that, from the time of the Apostles, the canonical writers, and their ex-

ponents, have mingled human wisdom and eloquence with Holy Scripture. When he has enumerated a long list of writers who have thus acted, he concludes by saying: "All these have so filled their books with the sayings of the philosophers, that it is difficult to know, which most to admire in them, their secular learning, or their knowledge of Scripture." At the end of his Epistle, St. Jerome adds: "I beg thee, therefore, to remind him who finds fault with us, on this score, that it is unwise for a toothless man to envy the teeth of them that eat, or for a mole to grudge eyes to a goat." Hence, it follows, that it is commendable, to make use of human eloquence and wisdom, in the Divine service; and that they who blame others for so doing, resemble blind men who envy them that can see, and ignorant men who blaspheme against what they cannot understand, as we read in the Epistle of St. Jude.

2. St. Augustine (*lib.* IV. *De doctrina christiana*), says: "If any man wish to speak, not only learnedly but eloquently, it will profit him to read, and to hear, and to try to imitate those that are eloquent." Hence, they whose duty it is to expound the Holy Scripture, must be careful to speak eloquently and fluently, for the greater advantage of such as hear them.

3. In the same book, St. Augustine continues: "Someone may here enquire, whether they who have by their profitable authority compiled the canon for us, are to be called learned, only, or eloquent also." He goes on to prove, that these authors are eloquent; and that they have adorned their style with rhetoric. He then concludes as follows: "Let us acknowledge, then, that our canonical writers, are not merely learned,

but, likewise, eloquent, making use of an elegance of style befitting them."

4. In the book before quoted, St. Augustine says: "An eloquent preacher, must, in order to induce his hearers to do what is right, not merely instruct and delight them; but he must, likewise, convince them." He shows, by eloquent passages taken from the Fathers, how those holy men instructed, and charmed, and convinced their hearers. Hence, it becomes plain, that he who has to preach or to expound the scriptures, must make use both of eloquence and secular learning. The same lesson is taught by St. Gregory and St. Ambrose, who are both remarkable for elegance of diction. St. Augustine, likewise, Dionysius, and St. Basil, have interspersed their works with many passages culled from secular authors. Nay, St. Paul himself makes use of a heathen authority in his preaching, as may be seen in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and in the first chapter of the Epistle to Titus.

5. St. Gregory, commenting on the words in Job ix., "who maketh Arcturus and Orion," etc., observes: "These names were given to the stars by devotees of earthly wisdom. As they who are wise with the wisdom of God make use, in Holy Writ, of the wisdom of the world; so, God Himself, the Creator of mankind, uses, for the benefit of mankind, our human language." This passage is a further proof, that the teachers of Holy Scripture, may, lawfully, employ human eloquence and learning.

But, we must remember, that, although an elegant style of preaching, is, at times, commendable; it is, likewise, under certain circumstances reprehensible. It is reprehensible when it is used from motives of

vain glory; or, when beauty of language, or a show of learning, are esteemed as the chief essentials in preaching; and lead to the neglect, or denial, of the articles of faith, which, being beyond the ken of human reason, are esteemed but lightly by earthly science. Again, they who consider eloquence and fluency of speech to be the chief essentials of preaching, strive to attract attention to themselves, rather than to the truths they utter. It was for preaching in this manner, that the false Apostle, incurred the reproach of St. Paul (2 *Cor. xi.* 6).

The Gloss, in the comment on the words, "not in the persuasive words of human wisdom" (1 *Cor. i.*), remarks: "The false apostles, fearing lest they should be considered ignorant by the wise men of the world, preached Christ deceitfully by their human wisdom, for they studied human eloquence, and they avoided all that the world accounts foolish." But it is praiseworthy to make use in preaching, of a harmonious and learned style; provided this is done, not from ostentatious motives, but in order to instruct our hearers, and to convince our opponents.

It is commendable to use eloquence and learning in preaching, when the primary motive in so doing, is, not elegance of diction, but the more profitable teaching of Holy Scripture, in whose service eloquence is used. When we act thus, we fulfil the words of St. Paul, "bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ" (1 *Cor. x.* 5). It was in this manner that the Apostle himself made use of eloquence. Hence, St. Augustine says, (IV. *de Doctr. Christ.*), that in "the Apostolic preaching, wisdom led the way and eloquence followed in its wake; but wisdom did not despise its follower eloquence." The teachers of the Church, in later times, have, for the

same reason, made a greater use of learning and eloquence; for the first chosen to preach the Gospel were not philosophers but fishermen and peasants. These, in their turn, converted orators and philosophers. Thus, our Faith consists, not in human wisdom, but in the power of God, "that no flesh should glory in his sight" (1 Cor. i. 29). (See likewise the Gloss on the verse, "For see your vocation, brethren.")

This explanation is our answer to the two first objections against religious preaching in an eloquent and learned style. To the third argument, we will reply in the words of St. Augustine (IV. *De doctr. Christ.*). When commenting on the words, "although I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge," he observes that St. Paul spoke thus, in condescension to his detractors; but that he does not acknowledge, that he was ignorant. This is a proof, that, in a teacher, learning is more profitable than eloquence. St. Augustine continues, that the Apostle "did not hesitate to declare that he possessed learning; without which he could not have been the doctor of the Gentiles." But, even if we understand this text as an affirmation, we cannot assume, that St. Paul made no use of eloquence in preaching. All that we can conclude is, that he did not, like rhetoricians, make fluency and elegance of style his main object in preaching; or else that he had some defect in his speech. The Gloss understands the words, "although I be rude in speech," to mean, "although I do not use ornamental language"; or, "although I have an impediment in my speech." Now, the false Apostles considered eloquence to be the essential part of preaching. They were, therefore, preferred by the Corinthians to St. Paul.

To the fourth argument we reply, that, when one

substance is wholly transformed into another, there no longer exists a mixture. In a true mixture, one of two substances is converted into a third. Hence, when a preacher, in expounding Holy Scripture, makes use of human learning subject to the truths of faith, the wine of Holy Writ is not adulterated; it remains pure. Adulteration of the Scripture would consist, in adding something to it, which would destroy its truth. The Gloss observes: "He who, instead of correcting his hearers, by means of the Scriptures, makes the Scriptural precepts subservient to their auditors, does, by his teaching, adulterate the wine of truth." These words are a reply also to the fifth objection.

The passage from the Gloss, quoted in the sixth argument, refers to that human wisdom, which is hostile to God. Now, human wisdom is always set up in opposition to the Divine wisdom, when men consider human learning to be paramount in importance, and when they endeavour to make the truths of faith subservient to the teaching of human science. This error is the origin of all heresy. The Gloss gives the same explanation of the text which was quoted from Proverbs in the seventh objection.

To the eighth argument we reply, that, good men ought not to be prevented from doing good, for fear that others, who do not equally well, should be despised. It is, rather, those who make themselves contemptible, who ought to be suppressed. Thus, the fact that certain prelates, from their worldly mode of life, are disedifying, when compared to religious, is no reason why religious should desist from a life of perfection. Again, the eloquence of religious is not to be blamed, because the preaching of certain prelates, is, on account of its lack of eloquence, but lightly esteemed.

CHAPTER XIII

ACCUSATIONS LEVELLED AGAINST RELIGIOUS, ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY RECOMMEND THEMSELVES AND THE ORDERS TO WHICH THEY BELONG, AND THAT THEY PROCURE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

As we have before said, religious are calumniated for performing actions, which, in themselves are perfectly indifferent. We will now, therefore, enquire into the grounds, on which these false charges are based. Religious are accused:

1. Of commending themselves and their order; and of procuring from others letters of recommendation.

2. Of refuting, instead of bearing with, the detractions of their enemies.

3. Of going to law.

4. Of causing their persecutors to be punished.

5. Of desiring to please men.

6. Of rejoicing in the good which God vouchsafes to effect by their instrumentality.

7. Of frequenting the courts of kings and princes.

1. The enemies of religious try to prove that they ought not to commend themselves, by quoting the verse of St. Paul (Rom. xvi.), "by pleasing speeches and good words," together with the following commentary on this passage, taken from the Gloss: "False Apostles commend their tradition, by fair words, which deceive the simple-minded." Hence, when religious

commend their order, and thus attract others to join it, they prove themselves to be false apostles. They resemble the Pharisees, to whom Our Lord said: "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you go round about the sea and the land, to make one proselyte" (*Matt. xxiii.* 15).

2. We read (2 *Cor. iii.* 1), "Do we begin again to commend ourselves?" As if, says the Gloss, "we were obliged, by another, to do so. Far be this from us." Hence, religious have no right to commend themselves.

3. In the same chapter we read: "Do we need (as some do) letters of commendation to you, or from you?" "The men here referred to," says the Gloss, "are false apostles, who have no virtue to commend them." Hence we see, that to require letters of recommendation, is to be a false apostle.

4. Again, St. Paul says: "by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves" (2 *Cor. iv.*); "without," as the Gloss says, "comparing ourselves with our adversaries." Hence, religious who commend their own order in preference to others, are not true Apostles.

5. In the same chapter (2 *Cor. iv.* 5) the Apostle, likewise, says: "For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ." They who commend themselves, preach themselves, and are, therefore, no true imitators of the Apostles.

6. In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (*x.* 12), we read the following words: "We dare not match, or compare ourselves, with some that commend themselves," *i.e.*, says the Gloss, "that commend themselves falsely." Hence, they who commend themselves, would appear to be false apostles.

7. Again, we read, (2 *Cor. x.* 18), "Not he who commendeth himself is approved, but he whom God

commendeth." Therefore, those who commend themselves, are not commended by God.

8. Again, "let another praise thee, and not thy own mouth; a stranger and not thy own lips" (Prov. xxvii. 2). "He that boasteth and puffeth up himself, stirreth up quarrels" (Prov. xxviii. 25). These two verses point out the unrighteousness of self-commendation.

9. Our Lord says, (*John viii.* 54), "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing." Hence, men who commend themselves, do, most convincingly, prove their own nothingness.

These are the chief arguments brought in support of the dictum, that no one is justified in commending, either himself, or his order. We shall now proceed to show, from the Old and New Testaments, that certain holy men have not hesitated to praise themselves.

1. In the Second Book of Esdras (*v.* 18), Nehemias says, in commendation of his own conduct, "Yet I did not require my yearly allowance as governor; for the people were very much impoverished. Remember me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done."

2. Job says, (*xxxi.* 1), "I made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin." Again (*xxix.* 14), "I was clad with justice; and I clothed myself with my judgment as with a robe." In both the chapters cited, the patriarch says many other things to his own praise.

3. St. Paul says: "I dare not speak of any of those things which Christ worketh not by me" (Rom. xv.); and again in the same chapter, "From Jerusalem round about, as far as unto Illyricum, I have replenished the Gospel of Christ."

4. The same Apostle, likewise, says, "I have laboured more abundantly than all they" (1 *Cor. xv.* 10); and,

"If any man dare . . . I dare also" (2 *Cor. xi.* 21). In the same epistle he writes many other things to his own commendation.

5. Writing to the Galatians (*i.* 16), he says, "I condescended not to flesh and blood." In this, and the following chapter, we find many similar utterances. We, also, see, that St. Paul commended his state of life. For (in 2 *Cor. iii.* 6) he says: "Who, also, hath made us fit ministers of the New Testament, not in the letter but in the spirit." In this chapter, again, he adds many other expressions in praise of the Apostolic dignity. Hence, a religious is justified in extolling his order, and in thus attracting others to enter it.

6. St. Paul commends the perfection of virginity, and exhorts others to this state in which he himself lived, saying: "I would that all men were even as myself" (1 *Cor. vii.* 7). Hence, it is permissible for religious, living in a state of perfection, to commend their mode of life. Self-commendation, therefore, though at times reprehensible, is, likewise, on certain occasions, praiseworthy. St. Gregory in his Homily upon Ezechiel (*ix. part* I.), writes as follows: "Just and perfect men do, at times, extol their own virtues, and make known the favours which they have received. They are not inspired to act thus, by motives of ostentation, but from a desire to draw those to whom they preach, to a more perfect life, by means of their own example. Thus, St. Paul, in order to divert the attention of the Corinthians from false preachers, tells them how he was rapt to Paradise. When perfect men speak of their own virtues, they imitate Almighty God who extols His own magnificence to men, in order to make Himself known to them."

St. Gregory proceeds to note the circumstances, in which men are justified in commending themselves. Then, in the following words, he warns his readers against rash and ill-considered self-praise. "We must remember," he says, "that perfect men never disclose their own good deeds, unless urged to do so by necessity, or by desire of their neighbour's profit. Thus, St. Paul, after narrating his virtues to the Corinthians, concludes by saying: 'I have become foolish; you have compelled me.' At times, good men are obliged to speak of themselves, if not for their neighbours' sake, at least for their own. Thus, holy Job, under the pressure of physical pain, and reproached by his friends for impiety, violence to his neighbour, and oppression, was driven to the verge of despair. Then, in self-defence, he called to memory his good deeds, saying: 'I was an eye to the blind,' etc. He did not enumerate his virtues from desire of praise, but, merely, to reanimate his confidence in God."

It is clear, then, from what has already been said, that men are justified in commending themselves; not from motives of vanity, but for the sake of their own spiritual advantage, or that of their neighbour. The most cogent reason which should induce a perfect man to commend his state of perfection, is, the wish to enkindle in others, a desire for the same perfection. Thus, it is permissible for a Christian to commend Christianity to infidels, in order to convert them to the Faith; and in proportion to the sanctity of men, we see them possessed with this zeal for souls. Thus St. Paul said, (*Acts xxxvi.* 29), "I would to God, that both in a little and in much, not only thou, but also all that hear me, this day should become such as I also am."

We now proceed to reply to the objections adduced against religious.

1. The words quoted from the Gloss on Rom. xvi., about such as falsely commend their traditions, refer, as we see by the context, to the traditions of such false preachers as endeavoured to induce the Gentiles to follow Hebrew customs, and tried, by their fluent language, to commend these rites to the ignorant heathens. The word "tradition" is not applied to any state of true religion, but to false doctrine and heresy.

2. Our Lord rebuked the Pharisees, (*Matt. xxiii.*), not for their anxiety to make proselytes, but for imbuing their converts with erroneous ideas, or for setting them so bad an example, that, at the sight of their vices, their proselytes relapsed into paganism. For this cause, the Pharisees deserved greater condemnation (see Gloss on *Matt. xxiii.*). The words, again, quoted from 2 Cor. iii., "Do we begin to commend ourselves," mean, that the Apostles extolled themselves, not from vain glory, but inspired by the motives mentioned by St. Gregory above.

3. To the third argument we reply, that St. Paul, did not prohibit the use of letters of recommendation. He merely showed that they were not needful for true Apostles, as they were for false teachers, who had no virtues to commend them as the Gloss explains. At times, however, holy men do need letters of recommendation. They want them, not on their own account, but for the sake of others, who know neither their virtue nor their authority. Thus, St. Paul commended Timothy, saying: "Now if Timothy come, see that he be with you without fear. For he worketh the work of the Lord" (1 *Cor. xvi.* 10). Again, in

the second chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, (19), he says: "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy unto you shortly . . . for I have no man so of the same mind." Again, in the Epistle to the Colossians (*iv.* 10), he writes, "Mark, the cousin german of Barnabas, touching whom you have received commandments." And writing to the Romans (xvi. 1) he says: "I commend to you Phœbe, our sister," etc. Thus, we see, that in the Apostolic times, it was customary to provide teachers, or other persons who might be sent to distant churches, with testimonials, or letters of recommendation.

4. To the fourth argument, we answer that, as holy men do not commend themselves, for the sake of their own glory, but for the advantage of others, so they, likewise, sometimes prefer themselves to others. Thus, just men prefer themselves to sinners; in order that sinners may be avoided and justice imitated. Thus, St. Paul says, (2 *Cor. ii.* 23), "They are the ministers of Christ: (I speak as one less wise) I am more." Sometimes, also, good men commend themselves, in order that they may be held in credit by men; for if they are despised by those to whom they preach, they cannot influence them. We know that St. Paul preferred himself, in one point, to the other apostles, though they were true apostles. For he says (1 *Cor. xv.* 10), "His grace in me hath not been void; but I have laboured more abundantly than all they." Now, they are the less reprehensible who prefer their state to one less perfect, in proportion as such a comparison is divested of aught that savours of vain glory. In this manner, St. Paul (2 *Cor. iii.*), compares the ministers of the New Testament to those of the Old Law; and he prefers the status of Doctor, to which

he belonged, to the other ranks in the Church. On this point he says (1 *Tim. v.* 17), "Let the priests that rule well, be esteemed worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." It may be said, that the Gloss, on this passage, as quoted above, is misinterpreted. For St. Paul speaks of the recommendation, not of words, but of deeds; whereby the Apostles commended themselves to the conscience of men. He shows, likewise, that the true Apostles proved themselves, by their works, to be better than the false Apostles. Hence, when the Gloss says, "without comparing them to their adversaries," the signification is, that the Apostles did incomparably more than their adversaries. Hence, the true meaning of the Gloss, is the exact contrary of that assigned to it.

5. The answer to the fifth objection is given in the following words of the Gloss. "We preach not ourselves, *i.e.*, our preaching is directed not to our own honour or advantage, but to the glory of Christ." Now, the Saints, at times, commend themselves; but they do so, not for their own glory, but to the praise of God, and for the spiritual benefit of their neighbour.

6. 7. The sixth argument is answered, by the following words from the Gloss. "We do not communicate with certain other men, (*i.e.*, false apostles), who are not sent by God, nor approved by Him, but who commend themselves by certain actions." From these words, we cannot conclude, that they who are sent by the prelates of the Church, may not commend themselves, when God commends them, so munificently, by bestowing the gifts of grace upon them. This is, likewise, the answer to the seventh objection.

8. 9. To the eighth and ninth objections we reply, that the authors cited in them, speak of the self-praise, whereby some men commend themselves, inspired by motives of vain glory.

10. The tenth objection is answered by the following passage from the interlinear commentary on the words, "If I glorify only myself," etc. The glory of them that glorify themselves is nothing. But the case is far otherwise with those whom God glorifies, by the bestowal of His heavenly favours.

CHAPTER XIV

CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST RELIGIOUS, ON THE GROUND THAT THEY RESIST THEIR DETRACTORS

We will next consider the arguments, whereby the assailants of religious try to prove that they are not justified in offering any resistance to such as detract them.

1. The Gloss on the words (1 Cor. xii.), "No one can say the Lord Jesus," etc., has the following passage: "Christians ought to be humble, and to bear reproach, and not to desire to be flattered." Therefore, religious who do not endure reproach, prove that they are no true Christians.

2. In 2 Cor. xii. 12, St. Paul says: "The signs of my Apostleship have been wrought on you in all patience." On which text the Gloss observes: "the Apostle makes special mention of patience, as being an essential of virtue." Hence, they who perform the apostolic function of preaching ought to be remarkable for their patience according to the words of the Psalmist (xci. 15), "Bene patientes, erunt ut annuncient."[1] They ought to bear with the malice of their detractors and to offer no resistance to it.

[1] These words of Ps. xci. are given in the Latin as quoted by our author, as the rendering in the English version bears a totally different sense, to that given to it in St. Thomas's text. Cornelius a Lapide, in his Commentary, reminds us that in St. Jerome's translation the word is *frondentes*, that the Hebrew word *rahanim* means *virentes et florentes*

3. "Am I, then, become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" asks St. Paul (*Galat. iv.* 16). The comment of the Gloss on this verse runs as follows: "The carnal-minded man will not suffer himself to be reproved as though he were in the wrong." Hence, they who will not bear rebuke, show that they live according to the flesh. Again, on the words in Phil. iii., "Beware of dogs," the Gloss says: "Understand that such men are dogs; not because they lack reason, but because they are wont to bark at truth, to which they are unaccustomed." Again "as dogs," says the Gloss, "obey habit, rather than reason; so false apostles bark at truth, in an irrational manner, and rend it." They, therefore, who rage against such as reprove them for their vices, hereby prove that they are false Apostles.

4. St. Gregory says, in his *Pastorale:* "He who is bent upon wrong doing, and desires that others should conceal his sin, shows that he loves himself better than truth. For, he will not suffer truth to be defended at his own cost." "God is truth" (*John xiv.*). They, therefore, who will not allow themselves to be corrected, show that they love themselves better than God. They are, consequently, in a state of damnation.

5. What has been already said on the subject is further confirmed by the words of the Book of Proverbs (ix. 8), "Rebuke not a scorner, lest he hate thee. Rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee." It is, likewise,

and *frondentes;* and that *bene patientes* is the form given to it by the Latin interpreter, who laid stress upon the meaning of the word, rather than the strict and literal translation. St. Thomas, quoting from the Latin version, uses the word *patientes* in its primary and conventional signification.—EDITOR.

supported by the following passages from the Old and New Testament.

"He that hateth to be reproved, walketh in the trace of a sinner" (*Ecclus. xxi.* 7). "Bless them that persecute you: bless and curse not" (*Rom. xii.* 14). "Bless them that curse you; pray for them that calumniate you" (*Luke vi.* 28). "We are reviled and we bless; we are persecuted and we suffer it" (1 *Cor. iv.* 12). All the texts which we have cited, seem to prove that it is the duty of perfect men, and especially of preachers of the Gospel, not to resist those that speak ill of them.

It can however be shown that at times apostolic men are justified in opposing their calumniators, as we shall now see.

1. "Not rather," says St. Paul (*Rom. iii.* 8), "(as we are slandered and as some affirm that we say) let us do evil that there may come good. Whose damnation is just." The commentary of the Gloss on this passage, runs as follows: "Certain perverse men, who misunderstand us, and who are inclined to blame us, assert that this is our teaching. Their damnation is just." In these words, the Apostle infers, that no credit is to be given to his detractors; and, thus, he resists them.

2. In his 3rd Epistle (x.), St. John writes: "If I come, I will advertise his works which he doeth, with malicious words prating against us." On this verse, the Gloss comments in the following terms. "We ought not, by our own fault, to stir up detraction against ourselves, lest we cause our slanderers to perish. If our enemies, animated by their own malignity, revile us, we ought to endure such treatment patiently, to the increase of our merit. It is right, however, at times, to suppress their slanders; lest, by propagating evil reports against us, they gain the ear

and harden the heart of those who would, otherwise, have listened to our preaching."

3. In the following words St. Paul shows (2 *Cor. x.* 10) that he thought it right to resist those that slandered him. "For his epistles, indeed, say they are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak; and his speech is contemptible. Let such a one think this, that such as we are in word, by epistles, when absent, such also we will be in deed when present." The Apostle thus treats those who speak ill of him.

4. St. Gregory in his Homily upon Ezechiel (*ix. Part* 1) says, "They who occupy so conspicuous a position, that their lives are regarded as an example for imitation, ought, if they can do so, to silence the detractions propagated against them. For these slanders may reach the ears of those who would, otherwise, have listened to their preaching. They may cause them to refuse to hear their words, and, thus, to become hardened in their sins." Now, they who practise a life of perfection, are regarded by all men as a model for imitation. It is, therefore, their duty, to suppress the calumnies set afoot against them.

5. St. Augustine (*II. de Trinit.*), writes as follows: "Modest and gracious charity gladly admits of the kisses of the dove; but chaste and cautious humility avoids the dog's bite; solid truth, likewise, repels it." Hence, we see, that detraction is, at times, to be avoided, and, at times, is to be combated.

6. We learn the same lesson from the example of a multitude of Saints. Thus Saints Gregory Nazianzen, Jerome, Bernard, and many others wrote apologies and epistles defending themselves against the attacks of their enemies.

In the matter of reproof, we must draw a distinction

between those who rebuke others in a legitimate manner, and with a desire for their correction; and those who bring false charges against their neighbour. Men of the first class should be, not only tolerated, but loved. Those of the second category, must be patiently endured, when their calumnies do not cause much scandal, or produce much injury amongst those who hear them. At other times, however, they must, if possible, be suppressed; not on account of the personal reputation of their victims, but for the sake of the public welfare. But, if such detractions cannot be silenced, they must be borne with patience. Thus, St. Gregory says, in the Homily before quoted, "As just men, may, at times, without arrogance, acknowledge the good that they do; so they can, without undue solicitude for their personal reputation, silence the tongues of those that speak against them. But, when their slanderers cannot be silenced, they must be patiently endured. Calumny in itself is not to be feared. We must only be on our guard, lest the dread of being slandered, should cause us to desist from doing right."

We will now examine, and refute, the arguments of our opponents.

1. True Christians bear reproof, when administered to them for the sake of correction. They resist, however, accusations brought against them in order to overthrow their work. More especially do they resist, when such charges are blasphemies, directed not only against their person, but against the truth which they preach.

2. Apostolic men ought certainly to practise patience. When they resist detraction, they do so, not out of impatience, but from love of truth.

3. Carnal-minded men hate such as rebuke them in charity. It is not, however, carnal minded, to oppose those who calumniate the truth.

4. The passage of the Gloss, quoted in the fourth argument, refers to men who, unreasonably, slander the truth, and injure its preachers. They who, under pretext of patience, permit falsehoods about the truth to be disseminated, are like the "dumb dogs, not able to bark," of which Isaias speaks (lvi. 10).

5. If they who will not suffer the truth to be defended at their own expense, show that they love themselves more than the truth; they, equally, love themselves better than the truth, who, rather than suffer their own peace to be disturbed, leave the assailants of truth unanswered. Hence, it is love of truth which inspires holy men to resist its detractors.

6. The following reply will serve as an answer to all the remaining objections. The authors, quoted in these objections, counsel us to love those that correct us justly, and they forbid us to pursue, with hatred or impatience, those that malign us. They advise us, on the contrary, to love and pray for our detractors. Holy men amply fulfil this duty; even while they refute the charges brought against them by their enemies.

CHAPTER XV

RELIGIOUS ARE CONDEMNED FOR GOING TO LAW

We will now consider the arguments brought forward to prove that religious ought not to go to law, nor to allow themselves to be defended by force of arms.

1. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians (*vi.* 7), we find the following passage: "There is plainly a fault among you, that you have lawsuits one with another. Why do you not, rather, take wrong? Why do you not, rather, suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" On these words, the Gloss observes: "It beseems perfect men simply to ask for what belongs to them, avoiding contention or legal proceedings." Hence, as religious are in a state of perfection, they ought not to contend with anyone.

2. Our Lord says, (*Matt. v.* 40): "If a man will contend with thee in judgment and take away thy coat, let go thy cloak also unto him." "These three precepts," remarks the Gloss, "embody the perfection of justice." Hence, religious, who profess to lead a life of perfection, ought not to go to law; they ought rather to suffer themselves to be despoiled of their goods.

3. Again, we read, (*Luke vi.* 29), "him that taketh away from thee thy cloak forbid not . . . of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again." The Gloss says: "This rule respecting our garments, applies,

likewise, to our other possessions." Religious, therefore, who are specially bound to the observance of these precepts, ought neither to prevent others from robbing them, nor to ask for their property to be returned.

4. Our Lord gave the following order to His Apostles: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, going forth out of that house, or city, shake off the dust from your feet" (*Matt. x.* 14). The same precept is recorded by St. Luke (*ix.* 5). From these words we see, that Apostles, and Apostolic and perfect men, ought not to litigate if they are not received into a town, or hamlet, or a society.

5. "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom nor the church of God" (1 *Cor. xi.* 16). They, therefore, who institute legal proceedings, depart from the Apostolic rule of perfection.

6. "Charity seeketh not her own," the Apostle writes, (1 *Cor. xiii.* 5), or as the Gloss explains, "requires not that her own property should be returned to her." Therefore, men who go to law to secure the restitution of their goods, have not charity.

7. St. Gregory (13 *lib. Moral.*), says: "He, that, for the sake of some earthly possession, disagrees with another, shows that he loves a material good better than his neighbour. This is contrary to the order of charity." They, then, who disturb their neighbour's peace, in order to recover their own property, sin against charity.

8. St. Jerome gives the following rule: "As long as threefold truth[1] be preserved, anything should be done,

[1] In his SUMMA THEOLOGICA (1ª Par. Quaest. lx. Art. 1, Ad. 1ᵐ), St. Thomas explains the "threefold truth" as being: (1) the truth which is natural to us, or natural knowledge (*veritas naturalis cognitionis*); (2) the truth which we acquire, or acquired knowledge

or left undone, to avoid scandal." Now, a man can, without any injury to the threefold truth, suffer himself to be despoiled of his goods; and, if he, in order to recover them, institute a lawsuit, to the disturbance and scandal of his neighbour, he is acting against charity. Food is essential for the maintenance of life; but, we may abstain from food, in order to avoid scandalising our neighbour. "If meat scandalise my brother I will never eat flesh" (1 *Cor. viii.* 13). If, then, in order to avoid giving scandal, we are to refrain from so necessary a thing as food, we ought, with far greater reason, to renounce any other temporal good, rather than disturb or scandalise our neighbour.

On the other hand, we can adduce proofs that holy men are at times justified in availing themselves of the protection of the law.

1. St. Paul, when in danger of being delivered to the Jews, appealed to the hearing of Augustus (*Acts xxv.*), *i.e.*, he appealed to the Roman law. An appeal is to go to a higher judgment. Therefore, perfect men may go to law.

2. We know, by the example of the same saint, that it is at times lawful for apostolic men to be defended by armed force. For, in the Acts of the Apostles (*xxiii.*) we read, that St. Paul procured his rescue from the snares of his enemies, by means of an army.

(*veritas cognitionis acquisitae*); and (3) infused truth, or knowledge (*veritas cognitionis infusae*).

In the same SUMMA THEOLOGICA, (2^{da} 2^{dae} Quaest. clxxx. Art. 3, Ad. 4^{m}) our author tells us that the knowledge of this triple truth comes to us from God, from man, and through our own study. Consequently to arrive at the knowledge of the triple truth we need (1) *prayer* ("I prayed, and there came to me the spirit of wisdom," Wisdom vii. 7); (2) *hearing* ("secundum quod accipit ex voce loquentis"); and (3) *reading* ("secundum quod accipit ex eo quod per Scripturam est traditum").—EDITOR.

3. We know, further, that it is permissible for holy men sometimes to defend themselves, especially in the case of an ecclesiastical judgment. For, when Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch, no small contest arose, between them and those who taught the brethren that they must be circumcised. Then Paul and Barnabas went up to the Apostles, to Jerusalem, about this question. St. Paul, alluding to this discussion, speaks of the "false brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privately to spy our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into servitude. To whom we yielded not by subjection, no, not for an hour" (*Galat. ii.* 4). Hence, religious, and perfect men, may appeal to an ecclesiastical court, in defence of their liberty.

4. St. Gregory expressly says (31 *lib. Moral.*), "that religious may defend their property by legal means." On the words of Job (*chap. x.* 16), "he hath laboured in vain," St. Gregory says: "When the care of our material property imposes upon us the necessity for travelling, we must, if we are despoiled of our possessions, at times endure our loss. At other times, we must, while taking every pains to preserve charity, prevent such robbery. We should act thus, not only to secure our own property, but, still more, to prevent those who would fain pillage us, from losing their souls. Hence, in defending our possessions against rapine, our chief care ought to be, not so much to guard ourselves against loss, as to save our enemies from committing sin.

5. St. Gregory, likewise, commenting on the words of Job (*xxix.* 25), "he goeth forward to meet armed men," says, "we are generally left in peace and quiet, if we care not to confront the wicked, for the sake of justice. But, if our heart be inflamed with desire for eternal

life, and our mind be truly enlightened, we shall, as far as circumstances permit, or the cause require, throw ourselves into the breach, in defence of righteousness. We shall go forth to intercept the wicked in their misdeeds, even though they do not seek us out. For, when unjust men aim their blows at the virtue that we love in others, they wound us also, even though they may seem to venerate our person." Hence, we see, that it is the duty of perfect men to defend others who may be attacked, even though they themselves be not provoked.

6. It is a charitable office to deliver the oppressed from their oppressors. "I broke the jaws of the wicked man, and out of his teeth I took away the prey" (*Job xxix.* 17). "Deliver them that are led to death" (*Prov. xxiv.* 11). "Rescue the poor; and deliver the needy out of the hand of the sinner" (*Ps. lxxxi.* 4). Now, we are bound to perform charitable offices, primarily towards those most closely connected with us. Hence, as religious are most closely bound to their religious brethren, they ought, in charity, to oppose such as oppress their order. By this, and by all the preceding arguments, we learn, that religious, not only may, but ought to, resist the violence and artifices of their enemies.

We must remember that the assailants of religious orders attack them, sometimes in spiritual, and sometimes in temporal matters. When religious are oppressed in what concerns their spiritual rights, they ought to resist their oppressors with all their might, especially when the questions involved affect, not only themselves, but others. For, religious embrace the religious life, solely in order to be free to devote themselves to spiritual interests. If their spiritual liberty

be curtailed, their object in becoming religious, is frustrated. Consequently, as it is a point of perfection for them to carry out that object, it is, likewise, a point of perfection for them, to resist all the obstacles which may be placed in the way of its attainment.

If religious be attacked as to their material interests, perfection demands, that, so long as their injury be of a private and personal nature, they should bear it patiently, as St. Gregory reminds us; lest, by resistance, they incite their enemies to violence. If, however, the damage inflicted on them, affect, not only their own, but the common welfare, (even in temporal matters), they ought, as far as possible, to resist their oppressors. It is not perfection but indolence and cowardice, to endure such oppression, when it might be resisted. For, as we have just said, everyone is bound in charity to defend his neighbour from injury as far as he is able to do so, according to the words of the Book of Proverbs (*xxiv.* 11): "Deliver them that are led to death," etc.

We will now proceed to examine the objections brought against our proposition.

1. By the words of St. Paul, quoted in the first objection, some things are forbidden to all men; others are forbidden to the perfect only. All men, as we know by the Gloss, are forbidden to plead a cause before a heathen tribunal; or to assert their rights, either by contention, or by fraud. Perfect men are forbidden to go to law, in order to obtain the restoration of their property. This rule applies, however, as Gratian tells us, (XIX. *quaest.* I. *cap. Episcopus*), to the restoration of private property. It is as lawful for them to recover common possessions, as it is for them to hold them. For, their common property belongs, not to themselves, but to the Church. Therefore,

when they sue for its restitution, they are seeking to recover what they hold for the Church. This Gloss is not authentic but magisterial. It is taken from St. Augustine, who holds that it is allowable and pardonable for imperfect men to go to law; but, that such a course is not *becoming* in the perfect. But, if it be not lawful for those in a state of perfection to appeal to a legal tribunal, such a course cannot be permissible for bishops; since the episcopal state is one of higher perfection than is the religious. Otherwise, an appointment to a bishopric would not be promotion for a religious.

The fact that a man has embraced a state of perfection does not render things unlawful for him which before were lawful; unless by vow he has bound himself to refrain from them. Hence, it is no more unlawful for a man to go to law after he has become a religious, than it was before he embraced the religious state; unless indeed, by instituting legal proceedings, he should violate his vow of poverty, or should occasion scandal. Litigation would be an infraction of the vow of poverty, were a religious to contend for some private property, since, by his vow, the possession of such property is interdicted to him. It may be added, and perhaps with truth, that the words of the Gloss, to which reference has been made, do not apply to a state of perfection, such as is the religious state. For, religious have no personal possessions; and hence the Gloss could not say, absolutely, that they might claim their own property. The words of the Gloss must, rather, be understood to refer to the perfect in charity, *i.e.*, to those who possess perfect charity, in whatsoever state of life they may be. Although they do not sin by making a legal claim to their property, they, never-

theless, by so doing, diminish the perfection of their charity. Hence, the Gloss does not say that it is forbidden for perfect men to go to law; but that it is *unbecoming* in them to do so. But, in certain cases, it is not even unbecoming in them to institute legal proceedings.

(*a*) The first of such cases, is, when a dispute has arisen concerning a spiritual matter. Thus, we read in the Acts that when dissension arose at Antioch, on the question of circumcision, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem, to submit the point to the Apostles (*Acts xv.*). Again, St. Paul speaks of "false brethren, unawares brought in" (*Galat. ii.* 4).

(*b*) The second case is, that in which contention arises on some matter, (even though it be a temporal concern), which may be a cause of spiritual harm. St. Paul, although he longed "to be dissolved and to be with Christ," (*Philipp. i.*), appealed to the Roman law for release, when he saw that his death, or imprisonment, would be an obstacle to the spreading of the Gospel.

(*c*) The third case, is that, in which material loss may accrue to another, especially to the poor. We defraud others, if, through our negligence, we suffer them to be robbed. If they are under our charge, our fault becomes more grievous. By such negligence, we do not offer to God a perfect sacrifice. For, "he that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor, is as one that sacrificeth the son, in the presence of his father" (*Eccles. xxxiv.* 24).

(*d*) The fourth case is, when the contention involves our neighbour's spiritual welfare, in as much as he would lose his soul were he to keep the property of another. Hence, St. Gregory, on the words of Job

(*xxxix.* 16), "he hath laboured in vain," says: "At times, it is our duty to bear, with patience, the robbery of our goods; at other times, we must, charitably, resist those who cheat us. This we do, not from self interest, but, lest, through their dishonesty, they should lose their souls" (31 *lib. Moral.*).

(*e*) The fifth case is when the example of dishonesty would deprave many, "Because sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil, the children of men commit evils without any fear" (*Eccles. viii.* 11).

2 and 3. We answer to the second and third objections, that, as the Gloss says, "the perfection of justice is established in three precepts." First, "If one shall strike thee on the right cheek, offer him the other." Secondly, "If anyone will contend with thee in judgment and take thy coat from thee, let go thy cloak also." Thirdly, "Whosoever will force thee one mile, go with him another two." The third precept is not to be understood literally; for, we do not read that it was so interpreted, either by Christ, or by His disciples. If anyone force us one mile, we must be prepared, if need be, to go another with him." Again, St. Augustine, speaking of the first of these three precepts, says, in his book "De mendacio," that it is to be understood to signify, that a man must be prepared, for the sake of truth, to suffer, not only buffets, but any torments, in a spirit of charity to them that inflict them. Literal obedience to the precept is not enjoined; since, neither Our Lord, nor St. Paul turned the other cheek. The third precept must be understood in the same sense, to wit, that a man must be ready to endure any material loss, in the cause of righteousness and charity. But, as we have before said, cases arise, in which, without

any prejudice either to charity or truth, we are justified in legally asserting our claims to property.

4. Our Lord ordered His Apostles to shake the dust from their feet, as a witness against such as refused to receive them. "Shake off the dust from your feet, as a testimony to them" (Matt. x. 14). The Gloss, commenting on the words, "shake off the dust," says: "Do so, as a witness of the travail which you have fruitlessly endured on their behalf." This shall be an appeal to the Divine judgment. That this is what Our Lord meant, we know by His words: "Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city" (*Matt. x.* 15). By these words, Our Lord instructs His disciples, to depart from those that will not receive them. For, they, like infidels, are reserved for the final judgment of God. St. Paul says of unbelievers: "Them that are without, God will judge" (1 *Cor. v.* 13). Those that are within, are committed to the judgment of the Church. Hence, if any man desire to be received into the Church, and they that belong to the fold refuse to communicate with him, he should appeal, not to the judgment of God, but to the tribunal of the Church.

5. Contention is forbidden to all such as are weak in faith. The words of St. Paul (1 *Cor. vi.*), "Already indeed there is plainly a fault," are thus explained by the Gloss, "The audacious clamour of contention, wars against the truth." The same explanation is given of the words in the Epistle to the Romans (*i.* 29), "murder, contention." Hence, they who appeal for justice, without noisy assertion of their claim, are not contentious.

6. It is not true, that none can, without a violation of charity, demand the restitution of their goods. What is true, is, that when avarice leads a man to demand

such restitution, he is not acting in charity. On the words, "charity seeketh not her own," the Gloss says: "Charity seeketh not her own; for she does not love money." However, as we have seen from a passage of St. Gregory, already quoted, zeal for fraternal correction, may, at times, stimulate a man to demand the restoration of his property.

7. If a man go to law, he need not, necessarily, be in discord with his neighbour. Although peace of heart should not be lost for the sake of any earthly gain, it does not follow, that it is never permissible to make a legal claim to our property. Peace of mind may be preserved in a law court, as on a battle field. Otherwise, war would be always unlawful.

8. A man who justly claims the restitution of his goods, does not actively give scandal. If scandal be taken at his action, he is merely the passive cause of such scandal. There are two kinds of scandal. There is a Pharisaical scandal, by which men, out of malice, take scandal at their neighbour, and cause scandal to him. When Our Lord was told that the Pharisees were scandalized at Him, He said: "Let them alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind" (*Matt. xv.* 14). There is, likewise, the scandal taken by weak and ignorant persons. When possible, we must avoid giving this scandal; but we must not do anything wrong out of fear of occasioning it. Now, it is wrong to suffer the property of the Church to be pillaged; and, even at the risk of giving scandal, we must resist such injustice. Thus, St. Thomas of Canterbury defended the rights of the Church, at the sacrifice of his life, making no account of the scandal taken by the King of England. Even if he could, without sin, have suffered the Church to be robbed, the fear of being a

passive cause of scandal, would not have been sufficient cause to justify him in permitting such pillage to take place. It is, also, possible to obviate giving scandal to weaker brethren, by speaking to them gently, and pointing out that it is really more to our neighbour's advantage to check him in a course of injustice, than it would be to suffer him, by indulgence, to fall into a habit of dishonesty. Furthermore, a man is more strictly bound to preserve himself from taking scandal than to avoid scandalizing others. Therefore, if he know, that unless he reclaim his own possessions, he will himself be scandalized, it is his duty to demand them.

9. Though it be true that food is essential to the preservation of life, this proposition does not apply to every kind of food. A man may abstain from one viand, and live on another. Hence, it may be better, for the sake of avoiding scandal, to refrain from one kind of food, rather than to abandon certain temporal possessions. For, by not requiring their restitution, we may, as has been said, occasion sin.

CHAPTER XVI

RELIGIOUS ARE BLAMED FOR CAUSING THEIR PERSECUTORS TO BE PUNISHED

We must next expose the grounds on which religious are expected to allow their enemies to persecute them with impunity.

1. We read in the Gospel of St. Matthew (*v.* 44): "Do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." Again, in St. Luke (*vi.*) the same precept is given. If we are to do good to our persecutors, we certainly ought not to cause evil to befall them.

2. "Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves" (*Matt. v.* 16). On this passage, the Gloss comments in the following words: "He that undertakes the office of preacher, ought not to inflict evil, but to suffer it." Hence, preachers who procure the punishment of their persecutors, prove themselves, thereby, to be false preachers.

3. "To no man rendering evil for evil" (*Rom. xii.* 17). Again in the same chapter it is written: "Revenge not yourselves, my dearly beloved." Hence, those who cause their adversaries to be punished, act in disobedience to St. Paul.

4. We read in the Legends of Saints Simon and Jude, that, when the general of the King of Persia wished to punish the heathen priests who had persecuted these Saints, the Apostles cast themselves at his feet, and

implored the pardon of their enemies. For, they said, they did not wish to be the cause of death to any of those to whom they came to preach salvation. Hence, they who cause their assailants to be punished, are not true, but false, apostles.

5. "As then he that was born according to the flesh, persecuted him that was after the Spirit; so also it is now" (*Gal. iv.* 29). St. Augustine observes, on this passage: "Who are they that are born according to the flesh? The lovers of the world. Who are they that are after the Spirit? The lovers of heaven and of Christ." They, therefore, who cause others to be persecuted, must, seemingly, be lovers of the world.

6. "Let us not be made desirous of vain glory" (*Galat. v.* 26). The Gloss says that "vain glory is the desire for victory, where no reward is gained." Now, those who wish to see their enemies worsted, are desirous of victory. Hence, it is, by no means, permissible for holy men to wish to see persecution arise against their opponents.

7. When St. Luke and St. John said to our Lord: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them?" He rebuked them, saying, "You know not of what spirit you are." They, therefore, who are filled with the Holy Spirit, ought not to cause others to be punished.

On the other hand, examples can be adduced, proving that holy men have inflicted chastisement, or caused it to be inflicted.

1. Our Lord "drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple; their money He poured out, and their tables He overthrew" (*John ii.* 14).

2. St. Peter condemned Ananias and Saphira to death, in punishment of their deceit (*Acts v.*).

3. St. Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, looked upon Elymas the Magician, saying: "O full of all guile and of all deceit, child of the devil, enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. And, now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time" (*Acts xiii.* 10). Here we have an example of an Apostle, both rebuking and punishing a sinner.

4. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians (*v.* 3), we read the following words: "I have already judged, as though I were present, him that hath so done. In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of Our Lord Jesus, to deliver such an one to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh." The meaning of this, is, says the Gloss, "that Satan may inflict on him bodily torments." Here, we have another proof of chastisement, inflicted by the Apostle on an evildoer.

5. In the Canticle of Canticles (*ii.* 15) we read: "Catch us the little foxes." By which words the Gloss understands, "pursue and overcome schismatics and heretics." "For (as another Gloss explains) it will not suffice for us to spend our lives in preaching and setting a good example, unless we correct those that are in error, and preserve the weak from their snares."

6. Dionysius says (4 *cap. De Div. Nom.*), "that the angels are not wicked, although they punish wicked men. Now, the ecclesiastical hierarchy is modelled on the heavenly. Hence, a man may, without any malice, punish evildoers, or procure their punishment.

7. We read (23 *Quaest. cap. Qui potest*), "To neglect to check evil, is to encourage it; and he who fails to put down public crime, may, legitimately, be suspected of secret connivance at it." Hence, not only is it

lawful to resist and punish offenders, but it is sinful not to do so.

8. Job (*xxxix.* 21) says of the horse, by which preachers are typified, "He goeth to meet armed men"; "because," says the Gloss, "a preacher opposes injustice in defence of the truth, even when this duty be not imposed upon him." Thus we see, that it behoves holy preachers to wrestle with impiety, even when impious men do not attack them. But, the Saints act thus, not out of hatred, but out of love. Thus, St. Paul, as the Gloss observes, when he delivered, "such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh" (1 *Cor. v.* 3), did so, that the Spirit might be saved; whereby we see, that his act was inspired, not by malice, but by charity. The Gloss further adds: "Elias, likewise, and other good men, punished certain sinners by death. By so doing, they inspired the living with a salutary fear, and diminished the number of sins, which might have been committed by those whom they condemned to death." Hence, the chastisement inflicted by holy men on sinners, cannot strictly be called persecution. For, they do not punish them for the sake of making them suffer, but in order, either to correct, or check them, in their sins; or else, in order to deliver others from their oppression; or to restrain others from crime, by fear of punishment. Sometimes, however, this chastisement may, metaphorically, be called persecution. Thus, St. Augustine writing to the Count Boniface (23, *Quaest.* 4, *cap. Si Ecclesia.*) says, "that the persecution inflicted by the wicked on the Church of Christ, is unjust; and that that inflicted by the Church on sinners, is just."

9. David says (*Ps. xvii.* 38), "I will pursue after my enemies . . . till they are consumed." Again, "The man that in private detracted his neighbour, him did I persecute" (*Ps. c.* 5).

We will now proceed to answer the arguments used by the enemies of religious, to prove that they are acting unlawfully, in causing their persecutors to be punished.

1. It has already been proved, that, when holy men cause punishment to be inflicted on their enemies, they act, not out of malice, but out of love. Hence, they do their enemies good, rather than harm.

2. Preachers ought not, in causing their adversaries to be punished, to make their discomfiture their chief object. Their aim in chastising their enemies ought to be their conversion, or the benefit of others.

3. He, who, out of zeal for virtue, causes another to be punished, does not return "evil for evil," but rather good for evil; since the punishment inflicted, is of benefit to him who suffers it. Punitive measures are, at times, remedial, says Aristotle (2 *Ethic*). And Dionysius observes (*cap.* IV. *De Div. Nom.*): "It is not an evil thing to be punished, but to deserve punishment." The prohibition against returning blow for blow, means, that we must not strike another, out of malice, or from revenge.

4. The Saints, as we have said, never punish others, nor cause them to be punished, save out of desire for their amendment, or for the public welfare. If men are suffered to commit crime with impunity, they wax bold, and become hardened in sin. "Because sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil, the children of men commit evils without any fear" (*Eccles. viii.* 11). Therefore, the Saints inflict penalties on evildoers; but, when they see that indulgence would be more profitable to them, they remit the punishment which is due. The Gloss remarks on the words, "You know not of what spirit you are" (Luke ix.), "It is

not well always to take vengeance on the guilty, for, at times, mercy will avail more in bringing them to patience, and the fallen to amendment." For this reason, Simon and Jude averted punishment from their enemies.

5. The lovers of this world unjustly, as St. Augustine says, persecute them that love God; and they, in turn, are justly persecuted by them.

6. The saints, as we have already said, do not cause others to be punished, save in the hope of causing them to amend. The benefit of their neighbour they count as their reward. Hence, they cannot be said to incur the stigma of vain glory.

7. The seventh objection is answered by the Gloss. The Apostles, it explains, were untutored men at the time they spoke thus; they were ignorant of the way in which they might cause others to amend. Therefore, they spoke, not out of zeal for their neighbour's correction; nor out of desire to check vice; but from a spirit of revenge. Our Lord reproved them for their ignorance. At a later time, however, when he had instructed them in a spirit of true charity, he gave them authority to punish sinners. Such power they exercised towards Ananias and Saphira, whose death was profitable, both in inspiring the living with awe, and in preventing the guilty man and woman from adding to their crimes. The same comment is made by the Gloss, on the words in 1 Cor. v. 3, "to hand over such a one to Satan." Or, we may say that our Lord forbade the disciples to call down fire on the Samaritans, because He knew that they would be more easily converted by mercy. The Gloss, also, accepts this view: "The Samaritans, who, in this place, were saved from fire, believed with greater firmness."

CHAPTER XVII

RELIGIOUS ARE ACCUSED OF SEEKING TO FIND FAVOUR WITH MEN

We will, in this chapter, examine the arguments brought forward to prove that religious ought not to seek to please men.

1. We read in Ps. lii. 6, "God hath scattered the bones of them that please men; they have been confounded, because God hath despised them."

2. St. Paul says (Gal. i. 10): "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Hence, religious, who profess to be the servants of Christ, ought not to seek to please men.

3. We read in 1 Cor. iv. the following words: "Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst." On this passage, the Gloss says, "the Apostles by preaching, fearlessly and without flattery, and by reproving the evildoers, won no favour with men." Hence, religious, who are bound to preach the truth freely, ought not to seek to please men.

4. "He who is charged with the gifts of the bridegroom, and seeks to find favour with the bride, commits adultery in his heart," says St. Gregory (in *Pastoral.*). Now the bride is the Church, the bridegroom being God's minister. Therefore, religious, who, although ministers of God, seek the friendship of men, are guilty of spiritual adultery.

5. The desire to win human favour is the outcome of self-love; and, as St. Gregory remarks, (in *Pastoral.*), "love of self renders a man indifferent to his Creator." Hence, in so far as a man strives to render himself popular with his fellow-men, he becomes estranged from God.

6. Religious ought to beware of anything savouring of vice; and, as popularity may render a man suspected of vice, as Aristotle says (IV. *Ethics*), religious ought not to desire to be popular.

These are the chief arguments brought forward by those who seek to prove that religious ought, under no circumstances, to desire to win human favour. It will now be our duty to expose the fallacy which underlies these objections.

1. St. Paul says (*Rom. xv.* 2), "Let every one of you please his neighbour to good, unto edification."

2. He, likewise, says, "Be without offence to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to the church of God; as, I, also, in all things please all men" (1 *Cor. x.* 32).

3. St. Paul, likewise, says (*Rom. xii.* 17), "providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men." Now, this exhortation would be meaningless, if it were wrong for men to consider how they may please their neighbours. Therefore, everyone ought to take thought how he may please others.

4. We read in St. Matt. (*v.* 16), "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father who is in heaven." Now, men will not be moved to glorify God, by the sight of good works which do not please them. Hence, it is

the duty of everyone to take care, that his works may be such, as will please his neighbour.

We must, however, remember, that three circumstances may make it unlawful in us to seek to please men. Firstly, desire of human approbation, must not be the primary motive of our actions. We ought to seek to please men, for the sake of their salvation, and for the glory of God. This is what is meant by the words in the *Pastorale* of St. Gregory: "Good priests should seek to please men, not in order to be loved by them, but, in order, that, by winning their esteem, they may draw them to the desire of truth. They ought to wish to gain the hearts of their hearers, in order to lead them to the love of God. For it is very difficult for an unpopular preacher to gain an audience." He adds, "St. Paul points out this lesson in the words: 'I please all men in all things.'" St. Paul, likewise, says: "If I should please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Hence, St. Paul did please men, and did not please them. For, when he wished to please them, he desired to win their favour, not for himself, but for the truth.

Secondly, we may not displease God in order to please men. This is the interpretation given by St. Jerome to the words in Galatians, "if I should please men," etc. "If," he says, "we can please both God and men, we must please men. But if we cannot please men without displeasing God, we ought to please God rather than men."

Thirdly, it happens, at times, that a man does all that in him lies, and yet he is rashly judged by others. If he do his best, and yet is misjudged by men, he ought to be content that his conscience assure him

that he is approved by God, without distressing himself on account of the false judgments of men. The Gloss makes the following comments on the words, "if I should please men," etc. (Galat. i.): "Some men are false judges, backbiters, and fault-finders. They try to cast suspicion on what they do not see, and to asperse deeds, on which no suspicion has alighted. Against such as these, the testimony of our own conscience is our best defence."

We shall have no difficulty in refuting the remaining objections.

1 and 2. "God hath scattered the bones of them that please men," is to be understood, as applying to those who make the favour of men the chief object of their ambition, and who, in order to please mortals, are ready to offend God. The words of Galat. i., "If I should please men," are to be understood in the same sense.

3. Although preachers of the truth may be hated by sinners who are unwilling to amend their lives, they gain the favour of those who desire instruction. "Rebuke a wise man and he will love thee" (*Prov. ix.* 8).

4. The words of St. Gregory, quoted as an objection to our proposition, refer to those who make it their sole ambition to find favour with men, and who desire to be loved with a love due to God alone, even though they do not commit any overt offence against Him. That this is the sense of the passage is clearly shown by its context, which runs as follows: "He is an enemy to our Redeemer, who desires, for the sake of his good works, to be loved by the Church."

5. The words of St. Gregory, quoted in the fifth objection, are to be understood, as referring to that

inordinate self love which causes men to seek, merely for their own sake, to please their neighbour.

6. The word to seek popularity (*esse placidum*), used in the sixth objection, means, not simply one who seeks to please men, but one who desires, to an excessive degree to please them, and who is willing to do wrong for the sake of pleasing them. He that merely seeks to please others in an ordinate manner, ought to be called a friend, and is so called by the Philosopher.

CHAPTER XVIII

OBJECTIONS BROUGHT AGAINST RELIGIOUS, BECAUSE THEY REJOICE AT THE GOOD WORKS WHICH GOD EFFECTS THROUGH THEIR INSTRUMENTALITY

THE following arguments are the chief of those adduced to prove, that religious ought not to rejoice at the good works, which God effects by means of them.

1. It is written in the Gospel of St. Luke (*x.* 20), "Rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you." Religious ought not, therefore, to rejoice, on account of any of the other great works which God effects by means of them.

2. Job says (*xxxi.* 25): "If I have rejoiced over my great riches, and because my hand had gotten much. If I beheld the sun when it shined, and the moon going in brightness; and my heart in secret hath rejoiced." *May evil befall me,* is the conclusion to be understood, though it is not expressed. St. Gregory (22 *lib. Moral.*), makes the following commentary on this passage: "Knowledge had not puffed up this holy man; therefore, he scorned to exult at his wealth. The greatness of his work had not elated him; therefore, he beheld not the brightness of the sun. He did not covet renown; therefore he took no heed to the moon, sailing in her radiance through the heaven." Hence, it is clear, that no one ought to rejoice on account of knowledge, or fame, or mighty works.

3. The degree in which men glory in anything, is proportionate to the joy they take in it. Now, man should not glory in his possessions. "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, and let not the strong man glory in his strength, and let not the rich man glory in his riches" (*Jer. ix.* 23). From this text we learn, likewise, that no man should glory in the good effected by him. Our adversaries strive from it to prove, that religious have no right to glory in the great works which God accomplishes by means of them.

1. The fallacy of this argument is shown by the words which we read in the Acts of the Apostles (*ii.* 22). We are told that, at the preaching of some of the faithful, "a great number, believing, were converted to the Lord. And the tidings came to the ears of the Church that was at Jerusalem touching these things; and they sent Barnabas as far as Antioch; who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, rejoiced." Here, we see how the Apostles were filled with joy, at the good work done in the Church, by their brethren and fellow-labourers.

2. We, further, read (*Acts xv.* 3), that, "Paul and Barnabas being brought on their way by the Church, passed through Phenice and Samaria, relating the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren."

3. St. Paul, again, thus addresses the Philippians (*iv.* 1): "Dearly beloved brethren, and most desired, my joy, and my crown." He evidently and openly rejoiced in those whom he had converted to Christ. Why, then, may not religious, and other men, rejoice at the great works which God effects by their means, and especially at the conversion of others?

4. We return thanks only for what we consider to

be a favour granted to us. Now, no one receives a favour, without rejoicing at it. If, then, it be not permissible to rejoice at great deeds, which God does by means of us, we have no reason to thank Him for them. This proposition, is, of course, absurd.

5. Aristotle says (I. *Ethic.*): "None is just who does not rejoice at works of justice." This sentiment agrees with the verse of the Psalm (*xcix.* 2): "Serve ye the Lord with gladness." No work of the Lord is so magnificent as is the work of justice, whereby He is served. Therefore, holy men ought to rejoice that God effects this great work by their instrumentality.

We must bear in mind that joy appertains only to that which is good; and that it ought to be proportioned to the degree of goodness existent in the things at which we rejoice. Hence, we ought to find our greatest joy in the highest good. We may rejoice in other things; but we ought not in them to find perfect joy. This is to be sought for, only in the highest good. Now, he that rejoices at the good which God effects by his means, rejoices rightly, if he place his joy in God, *i.e.*, if he rejoice, because the good, wrought through his instrumentality, tends to the glory of God, and to his own, and his neighbour's salvation. But, if he rejoice in any other spirit, he rejoices in his own works and commits sin. Hence, St. Gregory explaining the words of Job already quoted, says (22 *lib. Moral.*): "At times holy men rejoice on account of the good repute in which they are held. But, as they only desire to be esteemed for the sake of doing more good amongst those to whom they preach, they rejoice when they are thought well of, not for the sake of their own honour, but for the profit of others. It is one thing to seek human favour, and another to rejoice

at the improvement which we effect in our neighbour." The remaining objections will easily be answered.

1. The words, "rejoice not in this that spirits are subject to you" (*Luke x.* 20), are to be understood as an order to the Apostles to rejoice, not on account of their victory over evil spirits, but on account of the glory of God. The Gloss says: "They are forbidden to rejoice at the abasement of the devil, who fell through pride; they are, rather, to exult at the honour given to God." Or else, we may understand, that the Apostles were bidden, not to rejoice at the fall of Satan, as if that were the highest good. For, he might have been overcome, without any merit on their part. Their chief joy was to be, as Our Lord told them, that their names were "written in Heaven" (*Luke x.* 20).

2. The words quoted from Job, (*xxxi.* 25), are to be understood of the joy which produces elation of spirit. For it is pride for a man to rejoice in the works wrought by God, through his agency, as if they were a subject for vain glory.

3. He who refers the glory of his works to God, rejoices, not in himself, but in God, to whom he refers all that can be a cause for glory.

CHAPTER XIX

RELIGIOUS ARE BLAMED FOR FREQUENTING THE COURTS OF SOVEREIGNS

We will now examine the grounds, on which, it is alleged, that religious ought not to be intimate with the families of royal, or noble, personages.

1. In the Gospel of St. Matthew (*xi.* 8) we read: "Behold they that are clothed in soft garments are in the houses of kings." Now, "soft garments" do not beseem religious, who profess to lead a life of penance. Therefore, religious ought not to frequent the houses of kings and princes. The Gloss says (on this text): "Preaching and austerity of life are not compatible with the dwellings of those that live in luxury, and are haunted by flatterers, clothed in soft garments."

2. "He spoke with them concerning the Kingdom of God" (*Luke ix.*). On these words the Gloss says: "Christ imparted the nourishment of heavenly grace, not to them that dwelt in idleness in the synagogues, *i.e.*, the abodes of earthly dignity, but to them that sought Him in desert places." If, then, the religious life is ordained as a means of acquiring grace, religious ought not to dwell among those who are in the high places of this world.

3. St. Jerome writes in the following terms to Paulinus the priest: "Shun assemblies of men, exalted offices, honourable salutations, banquets, and all

such pleasures, which, as chains, bind you to the earth." Now, it is at the courts of princes, that assemblies and banquets are chiefly held. Therefore, religious ought not to frequent courts.

4. Boetius says in his book *De Consolatione*, that, "they who glory in power, seek, either to reign themselves, or to become attached to reigning sovereigns." Now, as it is highly reprehensible in religious, who have chosen a life of humility, to glory in power, they ought not to frequent the households of kings.

5. Honour leads to pride of life, which is one of the three things most to be reprobated. Religious who have renounced the world, ought to avoid all that pertains to honour. Now, as preaching at the courts of kings, or princes, or before a large concourse of people, is an honourable function, religious ought not to undertake it, nor ought they to frequent the company of royal personages.

This proposition is, manifestly, false, as is proved by the example of many holy men who have dwelt among kings and princes. Joseph lived at the court of Pharao, who, "made him master of his house, and ruler of all his possessions" (*Ps. civ.* 21). Moses was reared by the daughter of another Pharao, and was instructed in Egyptian lore (*Acts vii.*). Nathan the prophet was numbered among the confidants of David, and of Solomon. Daniel dwelt in the court of the king of Babylon, who made him governor of all his provinces, and, at his desire, set Sidrach, Misach, and Abdenago, over the works thereof. Commenting on the text: "Daniel himself was in the king's palace" (*Dan. ii.* 49), the Gloss says of him that, "he dwelt at the king's side, and was honoured by him, and was familiar with him." Nehemias was the cup-bearer of the Persian

King (Nehem. i.). Mardochai became ruler in the court of Assuerus (Esther viii.).

In the New Testament we, likewise, find examples of holy men who have dwelt with royal personages. Thus St. Paul writes: "All the saints salute you, especially those that are of Cæsar's household" (*Phil. iv.*). We read that St. Sebastian was one of the first favourites at the court of Diocletian. St. John and St. Paul, in like manner, were attached to the household of Constantine Augustus. St. Gregory, likewise, says in the Prologue to his Morals, that, "he dwelt in an earthly palace, to which many of his monastic brethren had, inspired by fraternal charity, followed him." It is not, therefore, unlawful for religious, or perfect men, to dwell in the courts of Kings.

In order to establish this controversy on a solid basis, we must remark that holy men seek certain things for their own sake, and certain other things for the sake of their neighbours. For their own sake, they would fain adhere to Christ by contemplation, either in this world, in so far as human infirmity will permit them so to do, or in the next world, where contemplation is made perfect. For the sake of others, however, charity urges them, at times, to interrupt their much-loved contemplation, and to expose themselves to the stress of active life. Hence, while, by desire, they enjoy the quiet of contemplation; for the sake of their neighbour's salvation, they patiently endure the toil of action. Thus St. Paul says, (*Phil. i.* 23): "I am straitened between two; having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ . . . but to abide still in the flesh is needful for you." St. Gregory says (*Homil.* XLII. *part* 1 *super Ezech.*): "One sole consolation remains to the soul enamoured of the

heavenly Bridegroom, but not yet admitted to His presence. She delights in working for the salvation of her neighbour, and in enkindling in the souls of others the fire of Divine love." This is the reason why the saints at times mingle with men, and seek the favour and friendship of the great. They are led to do so, not from desire of popularity, or advancement, but in order to lead others to salvation. For as St. Augustine says (8 *Confess.*): "They who are well known, are in a position to assist many in this work of their salvation; and they are followed by many." The Saint adds: "The enemy is most surely defeated in him whom he has held most securely, and by whose example he holds many others." Now, many proud men are held by the reputation of nobility, and many others by that of authority. Hence, the saints, inspired by charity, seek the friendship of those who are noble and powerful, in order, by their means, to become an instrument of salvation to many. Did they act thus for any other motive, their conduct would be reprehensible. St. Gregory says (in *Pastorali*), "He who desires to be useful to others, gives an example to all; since the only begotten Son of God left the bosom of the Father for the salvation of all men."

With this preface, we shall be able, easily, to refute all the objections made by our opponents.

1. The words quoted from St. Matthew (xi.), "They who are clothed in soft garments," apply, manifestly, to those who frequent the houses of kings for the sake of luxury. The words of the Gloss, quoted in the same objection, refer to those who dwell, idly, in cities, or, indolently enjoy high offices. But the saints repose only in God; they find their rest in Him alone. To be obliged to consort with a number of men, or to

accept posts of honour, is to them, a weariness, rather than an enjoyment.

2. St. Jerome's advice to Paulinus, is a warning against leading a public life, for the sake of pleasure, instead of for utility. He shows this, plainly, by speaking of banquets and all such pleasures. He makes this evident by the words which are subjoined: "Thou shouldst flee from these as from the chains of pleasure."

3. The words of Boetius contain a great truth. But, it does not follow, because they who glory in power seek the company of the powerful, that, therefore, everyone who frequents the society of the powerful, must, necessarily, glory in power. For, as we have already shown, the saints seek the company of men in high station, from a very different motive.

4. Again, though it be an honourable function to preach to a great concourse of men, the Saints do so, not from desire of celebrity, but for the glory of God, imitating Him who said: "I seek not my own glory but that of Him who sent me" (*John vii.* 18).

CHAPTER XX

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS SEEK, IN EVERY WAY, TO DEFAME THEM. FIRST OF ALL, BY EXAGGERATING ANY EVIL THAT MAY EXIST AMONG THEM

We have, hitherto, spoken of the false judgments passed by the enemies of religious about *things*. We will next consider the falsehoods uttered by them about *persons*.

It may, perhaps, appear that detraction uttered against persons, ought to be borne by them, without refutation. St. Gregory says, "The blame of wicked men is a testimony to the innocence of our life. For, if we be offensive to them that displease God, it is a proof, that our life must be upright" (IX. *Homil. part* 1, *super Ezech.*). Again, we read (*John xv.* 18), "If the world hate you, know that it hath first hated Me." St. Paul, likewise, teaches us that the judgments of men are to be lightly esteemed, saying (1 *Cor. iv.* 3): "To me it is a very small thing to be judged by you, or by man's day." We can, especially, afford to despise human opinion, when we have the testimony of a good conscience, and when we can say with Job: "My witness is in heaven" (*xvi.* 20).

On further consideration, we shall, however, see, that it is more prudent for religious to silence the tongues of their detractors. This is evident for three reasons:—

1. First, when religious are defamed, it is not the reputation of one man, or even of two or three, that suffers. The calumny affects the whole body of religious. Hence, their defamers ought to be manfully resisted, or else the whole flock of Christ may be torn by the teeth of wolves. Our Lord says: "The hireling seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth" (*John x.* 12). The Gloss remarks, that, by the "wolf," is meant either, "they who ravage the Church by violence, or the devil who, spiritually, scatters the faithful." The cowardly pastors whom Christ calls hirelings, are thus reproved by Ezechiel (*xiii.* 5): "You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel."

2. Religious ought to resist their detractors, because they not only require a good conscience for their own sake, they, likewise, need fair reputation, in order to carry weight with those to whom they preach. The Gloss speaking of detraction, says on the words of St. Paul (*Gal. iv.*), "Cast out the handmaid," etc., "All who seek for earthly happiness in the Church, belong still to Ismael. These are they who wage war against spiritual men, and defame them, and whose lips utter evil things, and whose tongues are full of guile." Therefore, religious ought to resist those who thus detract them. St. Gregory, likewise, observes, in the homily already quoted: "They who occupy a position in which they are looked up to as an example, ought, if possible, to silence the voice of their detractors; lest the faithful, believing these calumnies, refuse to listen to preaching, and become hardened in a sinful life." St. John, writing to Gaius (*Ep. iii.*), says of Diotrephes: "If I come, I will advertise his works which he doth, with malicious words prating against us." And St.

Paul writes in like manner, (2 *Cor.* x. 10), "His epistles, indeed, say they are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech is contemptible."

3. Religious ought to resist their detractors because they strive, not only to defame religious life, but to abolish it entirely. They strive to induce Bishops to cause all men to avoid religious, and to refuse to assist them in their needs. This policy is represented by the following words from Isaias (*vii.* 5), "Syria hath taken counsel against thee, unto the evil of Ephraim and the sons of Romelia, saying, 'let us go up to Juda, and rouse it up, and draw it away to us,' but, thus saith the Lord God: 'It shall not stand, and this shall not be.'" The same description of plot is mentioned in Jeremias (*ii.* 19): "They devised counsels against me, saying: let us . . . cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more." But, as Jacob said, "let not my soul go into their counsel" (*Gen. xlix.* 6). The cruelty of such detraction ought not to be tolerated; for religious may say with Esther (*vii.* 4), "We are given up, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. And, would to God we were sold for bondmen and bondwomen. The evil might be borne with, and I would have mourned in silence." In Ecclesiasticus (*iv.* 26) we find this exhortation: "Accept no person against thy own person, nor against thy soul a lie."

In order that religious may, effectually, resist their detractors, we will note the four forms which detraction generally takes. If any evil exist among good men, (1) that evil will be exaggerated. (2) Doubtful facts will be given tc the world as certainties. (3) Falsehoods will be invented. (4) Good deeds will be travestied, to wear a bad appearance.

Now, any evil which may exist among religious, can be exaggerated in three ways.

Firstly, in order of time. Thus, a crime committed by a religious before his conversion, may be recalled to the public mind, in order to put him to shame. The words, "Men shall be lovers of themselves" (2 *Tim. iii.*), are applied to religious. They are accused of coming from a life of crime, into a religious order, which their enemies call "creeping into houses." St. Gregory exposes the falsity of this accusation. Commenting on the words, "Iron is taken out of the earth" (*Job xxviii.*), he says (18 *Moral.*): "Iron shall be taken out of the earth, when the champion of the Church is delivered from the earthly bonds that have held him captive." A man ought not to be despised for what he formerly was, after he has begun to lead a new life. St. Paul, after enumerating the vices of the Corinthians, concludes by saying (1st *Ep. vi.* 11): "Such some of you were; but you are washed; but you are sanctified; but you are justified." Hence, the interpretation given by the opponents of religious to the text is contrary to the meaning of St. Paul. For, the Apostle did not intend to say, that those to whom he wrote had led sinful lives, and afterwards begun to creep into houses. Creeping into houses is one of the vices for which he rebukes them.

Secondly, if any evil prevail among religious, their enemies exaggerate it with regard to persons. Thus, the faults committed by two or three individuals, are attributed to all religious. Thus, it may be said, that in certain cases some men are not content with the food set before them, but seek better living elsewhere. Even should this accusation be occasionally true of certain individuals, that is no reason why it should be

levelled at all religious in general. Hence, St. Augustine, writing to Vincent the Donatist, says (23 *Quaest.* VI. *cap. Quicumque*): "If any man, not justly, but avariciously, retain the goods of the poor which you held in the name of the Church, the fact is displeasing to us. You, however, will have some difficulty in proving it. We bear with some men, whom we are not able to correct or to punish. We cannot forsake the granary of the Lord, on account of the chaff contained therein; nor can we break His nets, because of the worthless fish that they have caught." For, the fact that certain men among religious commit crimes, is no reason for defaming the whole religious body. Otherwise, the treachery of Judas ought to have been attributed to the whole College of the Apostles on account of the words, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (*John vi.* 71). St. Gregory, commenting on the words of Cant. (*ii.* 2), "As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters," says: "There cannot be bad men without good, nor good without bad." Of the bad we may use the words of St. John (1 *Epist. ii.* 19): "They went out from us; but they were not of us."

Thirdly, the enemies of religious exaggerate the degree of any evil that may prevail among them. Thus, the venial offences of religious, are represented to the world as heinous crimes. St. John tells us, that no one can live in the world without sin. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves" (1st *Epist. i.* 8). But, the men, of whom we have been speaking, magnify the slight faults observable even in the perfect, and speak of them as though they were serious crimes. Thereby they disobey the exhortation of the Book of Proverbs (xxiv. 15): "Lie not in wait, nor seek after,

wickedness, in the house of the just." They call religious false apostles, because, they say, that they seek hospitality in the houses of the wealthy, wherein they will be best fed; because they assist others in their affairs in order to be entertained by them; because they accept material assistance from those to whom they preach; and on other grounds of the like nature. Now, though such actions be faulty, they cannot be called grave crimes; nor ought those guilty of them to be on that account named sinners or false apostles. The Gloss, commenting on the verse in Galat. ii., "We by nature are Jews, and not of the Gentiles, sinners," says: "This epithet (*i.e.* sinner), is not used in the Scriptures of such, as, although they live upright and praiseworthy lives, are not wholly free from sin." This observation applies to those who see the mote in their brother's eye, but not the beam in their own (*Matt. vii.* 3). The Gloss, further remarks, that, "many, laden with grave sins, are so filled with envy, hatred, and malice, that they would rather blame and condemn their neighbour for his lesser offences, than strive to correct him." In short, those who venomously attack religious for small faults, and remain unconscious of their own serious defects, are, precisely, those of whom Our Lord said that they strain at a gnat and swallow a camel (*Matt. xxxiii.* 24).

CHAPTER XXI

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS SPREAD ABROAD AGAINST THEM REPORTS, OF WHICH THE TRUTH IS DOUBTFUL. FOR INSTANCE, THEY ACCUSE RELIGIOUS OF SEEKING POPULARITY, AND OF DESIRING TO GAIN GLORY FOR THEMSELVES, INSTEAD OF LABOURING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

We will next consider how the enemies of religious propagate against them accusations, of which the truth is doubtful.

Doubt exists about future events, and also about the workings of a man's heart. Nevertheless, the enemies of the religious life, do not hesitate to assert, that religious will, eventually, become both immoral and unbelieving. They, also, profess to be able to read the hearts of religious, and accuse them of desiring popularity, of seeking their own glory instead of the glory of God, and of many other things of the like nature. Such accusations convict their authors of rash judgment. "Let us not, therefore, judge one another, any more," says St. Paul (*Rom. xiv.* 13). The Gloss hereon observes: "We judge rashly, if we pass sentence on the secret things of another man's heart; or if we foretell what a man, who now seems either good or bad, will be in the future." Such judgments proceed, either from pride, or envy; and the authors of them prefer rather to blame, and to backbite other

men, than to correct or improve them. They, likewise, lay claim to the power of Almighty God, to whom alone it belongs to read the future and the secrets of man's heart. Isaias says (*xli.* 23), "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, and we shall know that ye are gods." Jeremias, likewise, says (*xvii.* 9): "The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable; who can know it? I am the Lord who search the heart." St. Paul writes (1 *Cor. iv.* 5), "Judge not before the time." The Gloss remarks on these words: "It is an insult to the judge, if his slave presume to anticipate him in pronouncing sentence." These words apply to those who pass judgment, on causes, which the Lord reserves to Himself.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS PROPAGATE DISTINCT FALSEHOODS CONCERNING THEM, AFFIRMING, FOR INSTANCE, THAT RELIGIOUS ARE FALSE APOSTLES, FALSE PROPHETS, AND FALSE CHRISTS

We have still to consider the falsehoods propagated against religious by their enemies.

The opponents of religious are not content with calumniating their victims; they strive, likewise, to cast upon them suspicion of being guilty of heinous crimes. They assert, that religious are worthy of all detestation; and that they are unfit society for other men. They fill up the measure of their detraction, by declaring religious to be responsible for all the evils which have ever come upon the Church, or which ever shall assail her; and they declare that religious are, likewise, accountable for every trouble, under which the Church at present labours. They are, further, accused of being the false apostles who disturbed the primitive Church, and also of being the thieves, robbers, and "creepers into houses" against which the Church has, unto all time been warned; and they are also said to be those heralds of Antichrist, who, in the latter days of the Church, are to bring danger upon her.

We will, in due order, refute these calumnies.

Religious are accused of being false apostles. In order to show how untruly this epithet is applied to

religious, we must first examine, what is meant by false apostles. In the Holy Scripture we find other expressions of the same kind, such as, *false prophets*, and *false Christs*. The following words of St. Peter (2 *Ep. ii.* 1): "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there shall be among you lying teachers," apply to all these disseminators of falsehood. For the office of a preacher and an apostle, is to be a mediator between the Lord and His people, by preaching the Word of God. Thus St. Paul says (2 *Cor. v.* 20): "For Christ, therefore, we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us." Now, a man may be a false apostle, or a false prophet, for one of two reasons. Firstly, he may not be sent by God: "I did not send prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied" (*Jer. xxiii.* 21). Secondly, a false apostle, or prophet, will proclaim, not the Word of God, but his own inventions: "Hearken not to the words of the prophets that prophesy to you, and deceive you; they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord" (*Jer. xxiii.* 16). Both these two accusations are brought against false prophets and apostles in the following words of Ezechiel (*xiii.* 6): "They see vain things, and they foretell lies, saying: 'The Lord saith'; whereas the Lord hath not sent them." Alluding to the pertinacity of such false teachers, the Prophet adds: "They have persisted to confirm what they have said." When Jeremias was condemned as a false prophet, he hastened to exculpate himself from both these charges. He said: "In truth the Lord sent me to you." This refers to the first accusation. He adds: "to speak all these words in your hearing." This is his defence against the second charge (*Jer. xxvi.* 15).

The false apostles of the New Testament were recognisable, likewise, by these two characteristics, viz., first, that they were not sent by God, and, secondly, that they propagated false doctrine. Now preachers, bearing a commission from the bishops of the Church, are sent by God. St. Augustine in his Epistle to Orosius interprets the word *Apostle* as signifying *sent*. "There are," he says, "four kinds of Apostles. Those sent by God. Those sent by God by means of man. Those sent by man alone. Those who are sent by their own inclination. Moses was sent by God. Jesus Nave[1] by God and man. They, who, in our times, are raised by public favour to the priesthood, are sent by man alone. False prophets are sent by none; they go forth at their own desire." The Saint adds: "He should be considered as sent by God, who is not chosen out, by human praise or flattery, but who is recommended by the excellence of his life, and by the wishes of apostolic priests." Those who preached heretical doctrine, were, likewise, called false apostles. This we know by the testimony both of St. Paul and of the Gloss, on his words. The Apostle writes (*Gal. i.* 16): "Only there are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ." The Gloss thus comments on the words: "These were the false apostles who said that the Gospel was opposed to the law of Moses."

Again, on the words, "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets" (*Mark xiii.* 22), the Gloss says: "This verse is to be understood as referring to

[1] *Josue.* "Valiant in war was Jesus the son of Nave who was successor of Moses among the prophets, who was great according to his name. Very great for saving the elect of God, to overthrow the enemies that rose up against them, that he might get the inheritance for Israel" (Ecclus. xlvi. 1. 2).—EDITOR.

the heretics who attacked the Church, declaring that they were Christs. The first of these impostors was Simon Magus; the last will be Antichrist." He who preaches without any commission to do so, or teaches false doctrine, does so, inspired by some bad motive, either of covetousness, or pride, or vain glory. Such men are deprived of the grace of God; and, consequently, commit sins, more or less heinous. But, everyone who preaches for the sake of gain, or popularity, is not, necessarily, a false apostle or false prophet; otherwise, there would be no distinction between a hireling and a false apostle. They who preach for the sake of anything, save of the glory of God and the good of souls, are hirelings; let their preaching be true or false, authorised or unauthorised. But, such men cannot be called false prophets, unless they either bear no commission, or teach false doctrine. In the same way, every sinner who administers the sacraments, or preaches the Word of God, is not, necessarily, a false apostle or a false prophet. For, true prelates are true apostles; although, at times, they may be sinful.

Thus, the detractors of religious, who call them false prophets or false apostles, are, by their own words, convicted of folly, or malice. For, the fact that religious may be guilty of sins, more or less heinous, such as seeking their own glorification, taking vengeance on their enemies, and the like, cannot make them false prophets, or false apostles, provided that they bear a commission to preach, and that they teach true doctrine. The enemies of religious do not presume to question the orthodoxy of their preaching. To the arguments against the right of religious to preach, we have already fully replied. It remains, then, for

us to say, that those who accuse religious of being false apostles or false prophets, are themselves guilty of falsehood. They may, with the same deceitfulness, accuse others of the same crime. The fact that false apostles have done many things which other sinners, and even just men, have done, is no reason for calling those other men false apostles also. We have, however, already shown the fallacy of such an argument.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS IMPUTE TO THEM ALL THE EVILS FROM WHICH THE CHURCH HAS EVER SUFFERED. THEY, ALSO, ACCUSE THEM OF BEING WOLVES, AND ROBBERS, AND OF CREEPING INTO HOUSES

We must now examine the grounds on which religious are accounted responsible for all the evils which have ever overtaken the Church.

The enemies of religious accuse them of being wolves and robbers, because, they say, they enter the fold, (*i.e.* by preaching, and hearing confessions), by a door which is not the legitimate one. By this assertion, they prove their own folly. For, as the Gloss reminds us, Christ is the door. No prelate is the door; for, as the Gloss adds, Christ has reserved this office to Himself. Hence, they who enter not the fold by the door, are Jews, Gentiles, philosophers, Pharisees, and heretics, who enter not by Christ; not such as do not enter by means of a bishop.

Religious are called thieves, because they are accused of stealing what is not their own, by converting the sheep of Christ, not to His doctrine, but to their own tenets. They are called robbers, because they are accused of slaying the sheep which they steal. The words of the Gloss are interpreted in this sense. But, granted that it be justifiable to say, that those who

preach Christ truly, but without permission from a bishop, are thieves, and robbers, this accusation cannot, as we have already shown, be made with regard to religious, unless we hold that a bishop, or the Pope, is not the immediate superior of anyone under the jurisdiction of a parish priest.

Religious are, likewise, termed ravening wolves; because they are said to minister to the spiritual needs of the faithful, in order to batten on their material goods, just as wolves devour sheep. In this, they are clearly deceived. Our Lord draws a distinction between a wolf and a hireling. The Gloss attributes to a hireling the vices, which, according to the enemies of religious, are peculiar to wolves. "A hireling," says the Gloss, "is one who seeks what belongs to Christ; and who serves God, not for His own sake, but in the hope of a reward." Hence, they, whose sole crime is to preach for the sake of temporal gain, are hirelings. They who physically ill-treat the faithful, as do tyrants, or who spiritually scatter them, as do the devil and heretics, his ministers, are wolves. This is made clear by the words in the Acts of the Apostles (*xx.* 29), "I know, that after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you." On this text the Gloss says: "These wolves signify heretics, who are insidious, cruel, and strong in controversy." Again, the words in the Gospel of St. Matthew (vii. 15), "Within they are ravening wolves," are specially applied by the Gloss to heretics, who, "in the malice of their hearts, and in their desire to injure souls, resemble wolves, whether they pursue the faithful by exterior persecution, or deprave them by false teaching." We have already pointed out, that it is a rash judgment to assert, that

a man's chief motive in ministering spiritually to his neighbour, is the hope of reaping material advantage.

Religious are accused of "creeping into houses"; because they are said to hear confessions, without permission from the parish priests. Thus, they creep into men's consciences. Those who accuse them of so doing, quote, in support of their opinion, the following words from the Gloss (on 2 *Tim. iii.*): "They creep into houses, *i.e.*, they investigate the qualities of men, and lead captive those whom they judge fitting disciples." Now, priests cannot know the characteristics of men, save by confession.

As these words of the Gloss are considered, by the enemies of religious, conclusive evidence in support of their accusations, we will examine what is the true meaning of this passage. St. Paul foretold that, "the latter days of the Church would be times of peril, and, that there would be men, lovers of themselves," etc. "The term, *latter days*," writes St. Augustine to Hesychius, "is sometimes used of the Apostolic times." Thus, we read in the prophet Joel (*ii.* 28): "In the latter days I will pour out my spirit." St. Peter said that this prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (*Acts ii.* 16). Sometimes, however, the latter days are understood as meaning the *Last* Day, "I will raise him up at the last day" (*John vi.* 55). In the passage to which reference has been made, however, the latter days must be taken to mean the time nearest to the Last Day. For the Apostle speaks of the future, when he says: "In the last days shall come dangerous times." These words agree with those that we find in the Gospel of St. Matthew (xxiv. 12), "Because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold." The Gloss reminds us of the words of St. Paul,

"men shall be lovers of themselves." These are not to be understood as meaning that the vice of self-love, or any other vice, has, at any time, been absent from the world; but that it will increase, in proportion as malice increases. There were in the primitive Church, some men tainted with these vices; otherwise St. Paul would not have bade Timothy avoid them. And, as if Timothy had asked him, how he was to avoid what did not exist, the Apostle says, by way of answer: "Of these sort are they who creep into houses" (2 *Tim. iii.*). The vices which he mentions in the first place, were to exist in years to come; but that of creeping into houses, was an evil of his own time. He speaks of "they who creep," not of they who *will* creep; and of "they who lead captive," not of they who "*will* lead captive." We are not to suppose, that, although using the present tense, he can have intended his words to be taken in the future tense. For, as St. Augustine says, in the same Epistle, "there were in the early Church, men distinguished by creeping into houses." The words signify men, ensnared by the vices which will flourish in the latter days.

This is more expressly shown by the words in the Epistle to Titus (*i.* 10): "There are also many disobedient, vain talkers, and seducers; especially they who are of the circumcision, who must be reproved; who subvert whole houses; teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." By those, then, "who creep into houses," are meant, men who cunningly introduce themselves into families, and propagate false doctrine, or those who insinuate themselves into the consciences of men, and bind them with the chains of error. Such men St. Paul calls, "men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 *Tim. iii.*).

The expression, "reprobate concerning the faith," cannot be understood as used of men who are to appear in the future. St. Paul does not say: "They who now creep into houses, will be reprobate concerning the faith." He speaks in the present tense; just as when he says, "these resist the truth." Their folly shall be manifest to all men. The Gloss says, "that they shall be made manifest by means of the good," and it reminds us that, "these words were verified, especially, by St. John, who overcame the heretics of the East." Thus, it is plain, that the words of St. Paul apply to heretics. Hence, even were it true that religious hear confessions without any licence from their bishops, the foregoing passage from St. Paul would not be applicable to them, unless they can be proved to teach heretical doctrine. Hence, the whole fabric which has been built up, to prove that religious who hear confessions are responsible for the evils which will hereafter come upon the Church, falls to the ground.

We have already proved the right of religious to hear confessions; and we have seen, also, the benefit which results from their so doing.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS ATTRIBUTE TO THEM THE EVILS WHICH WILL BEFALL THE CHURCH IN THE LATTER DAYS. THEY TRY TO PROVE THAT THE TIMES OF ANTICHRIST ARE AT HAND

We will now consider how the enemies of religious attribute to them all the evils which will befall the Church in her latter days, by declaring that they are the forerunners of Antichrist. They adduce two arguments, in support of this proposition. (1) They say that the days of Antichrist are at hand. (2) They say that religious are the emissaries of Antichrist, because they preach and hear confessions.

1. They try to prove that the latter days of the world are at hand, by the words of St. Paul, (1 *Cor. x.* 11), "These things are written for our correction upon whom the ends of the world are come." They also quote the words of St. John (1*st Ep. ii.* 18), "Little children, it is the last hour." St. Paul writes again, (Heb. x. 37): "For yet a little and a very little while, and he that is to come will come, and will make no delay." In the Epistle of St. James (*v.* 9) we read: "Behold the Judge standeth before the door." Those who quote these texts, in support of their arguments, maintain, that as so long a time has elapsed since the apostolic times, the advent of Antichrist must be imminent.

We may, of course, gather from these passages that the time of Antichrist is at hand. For, the Holy Scripture always speaks of time as being very short, in comparison to eternity. Thus, in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians (*vii.* 29), we read: "The time is short." In this sense, the interpretation given to these words by our opponents is not reprehensible. Nevertheless, the texts which they quote, cannot be considered as a confirmation of their opinion, that the days which are to be dreaded in the days of Antichrist, are immediately imminent; and that they are caused by the religious of our day, into whose conduct (they say) it behoves bishops to make enquiries. It is presumption to conclude, from the texts just quoted, that Antichrist is to come within some definite period of time, be it seven years, or a hundred, or a thousand years. Our Lord said to His disciples, when they asked Him: "It is not for you to know" (Acts ii. 7). As St. Augustine writes to Hesychius: "If it was not for the disciples to know, much less is it for any others." Again, we read (*Matt. xxiv.* 36): "Of that day and hour no one knoweth, not even the angels of heaven." And in the 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians (*ii.* 2) we read: "We beseech you, brethren, . . . that you be not easily moved from your sense . . . as if the day of the Lord were at hand."

St. Augustine says (*Epist. ad Hesychium*): "You say the Gospel tells us that no man knoweth that day or hour. I tell you, as far as my understanding will suffice, that no man can know the month nor the year of the coming of the Lord. This seems as if the words had been understood to mean, that, though none can say in what year the Lord will come, it is possible to know in what septet, or decade of years, his coming

may be expected." St. Augustine further says: "Although we cannot understand this, I would ask you whether we can know the time of the coming of the Lord, so far as to be able to say: He will come within the next fifty, or hundred years, or within some period more or less extended?" And again: "If you say that you cannot understand, I agree with you."

2. Certain men were condemned in the early days of the Church for teaching, as men teach now, that the coming of the Lord was imminent. We have this on the authority of St. Jerome (*De illustr. viris*), and of Eusebius, (*Ecclesiast. Histor.*). No period, either long or short, can be determined, in which is to be expected the end of the world, or the coming of Christ or of Antichrist. It is for this reason, that we are told, that, "the day of the Lord shall come as a thief" (1 *Thess. v.* 2), and that as, "in the days of Noe they knew not till the flood came and took them all away, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. xxiv. 38). St. Augustine, in his Epistle to Hesychius, speaks of three classes of men who made assertions respecting the coming of Our Lord. One class expects Him soon; another later; and the third declares its ignorance of the time of His coming. This last opinion meets with the approbation of St. Augustine, and he censures the presumption of the others.

Those who say that the second advent is at hand, try to establish the following argument. The last age begins with the coming of Christ. Foregoing ages have not lasted longer than a thousand years. As, then, much more than a thousand years have elapsed since the coming of Christ, His second coming must be shortly expected. This argument is answered by St. Augustine (*lib.* 83 Quaest. LX.). He writes thus:

"Age is supposed to include a time equal to the aggregate of all the periods that have elapsed." He compares this latter time to old age. Then he concludes, by saying: "It is, thus, uncertain by what generations the final period of time, which begins with the coming of Our Lord and is to end with the end of the world, is to be counted." God has chosen, for some wise purpose, to keep this hidden. So it is written in the Gospel. St. Paul also declares that, "the day of the Lord is to come like a thief in the night."

3. Those who believe in the speedy coming of Antichrist, say that his appearance is heralded by eight signs.

1. They quote the words of Daniel (*vii.* 25) concerning Antichrist: "He shall think himself able to change times." That is to say, according to the Gloss, "His pride is so excessive, that he strives to alter laws and ceremonies." On account of these words the days of Antichrist are said to be at hand; because certain men try to alter the Gospel of Christ into another gospel, which they call "eternal."[1] The Gospel of which they speak, is a certain Introduction to the books of Joachim, which is condemned by the Church. Or else, it is the doctrine of Joachim, whereby they say, the Gospel of Christ is altered. But granted that this hypothesis were true, it would be no token of the approach of

[1] The "Introduction to the Eternal Gospel," as it was called, was the production of an anonymous writer (supposed to be a Friar), who, having become impregnated with the teaching of Abbot Joachim, himself a visionary, professed to foretell the future. Amongst other absurd, and even heretical propositions, which he broached, were the following. The doctrine of Abbot Joachim was to supersede that of Jesus Christ. As the Old Testament had given place to the New, so the New Testament was to be supplanted in the year 1260. Then would begin the third epoch of the world, over which the Holy Ghost would preside. Another Gospel and another priesthood would then take the place of the old. These were to be the days of per-

Antichrist. For, even in the days of the Apostles, certain men tried to alter the Gospel of Christ. Thus St. Paul says (*Gal. i.* 6): "I wonder that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel."

2. The second sign of the coming of Antichrist, is supposed to be found in the words of the Psalmist (ix. 21): "Appoint, O Lord, a lawgiver over them." This the Gloss interprets to mean, "the Antichrist, the giver of an evil law." As the doctrine which we have already mentioned, which they call the law of Antichrist, was promulgated at Paris, it is thought to be a sign that Antichrist is at hand. But, it is not true to say, that the doctrine of Joachim, or that which is contained in the Introduction to the Gospel of Joachim, howsoever reprehensible it may be, is the doctrine which will be preached by Antichrist. For, Antichrist will proclaim himself to be God. St. Paul says expressly (2 *Thess. ii.* 4), "So that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God." For, if, by the teaching of Antichrist, all false doctrine is to be understood, just as all heretics are called Antichrists; then, the alleged proof of the speedy coming of Antichrist is no proof at all. For, from the earliest days of the Church, there has never been a time, in which

fection. A new religious order, greater than all the others (that of the *Minims*), would become the supreme spiritual power amongst all orders in the Church.

The "Introduction to the Eternal Gospel" was submitted to the Holy See for condemnation by William of St. Amour and his party. Having been examined by two Dominicans, at the instance of the Sovereign Pontiff, it was condemned, and (like the "Perils of the last times" of St. Amour) it was publicly burned.

The history of the "Introduction to the Eternal Gospel" is given by Touron in his "Vie de St. Thomas d'Aquin," Livre ii. chap. xii. pag. 143 (Edit. Paris, M.D.C.C.XL.).—EDITOR.

heretical teaching has not been disseminated. "Even now there are become many Antichrists" (1 *Ep. John ii.*). On these words, the Gloss remarks: "All heretics are Antichrists."

3. The third supposed sign of the coming of Antichrist is found in the Book of Daniel (*v.*) and in Isaias (*xxi.*). We read there the account of the hand that wrote *Mane, Thecel, Phares* on the wall of Babylon. Those who believe that Antichrist is at hand, maintain, that the same prediction which formerly was written up in Babylon, is now written in the Church. *Mane* was interpreted to mean, "God hath numbered thy Kingdom and hath finished it"; and the Kingdom of Christ is now numbered, for it has been foretold that it is to endure a thousand two hundred and seventy years. *Thecel* signified, "thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting"; and the "Eternal Gospel" is preferred to the Gospel of Christ. *Phares* meant, "thy Kingdom is divided, and is given to the Medes and Persians"; and the Kingdom of the Church is now finished, and given to others. Thus, the writing on the wall signified, both the destruction of the Church, and the ruin of Babylon.

This, however, seems a very foolish idea. St. Augustine tells us (18 *de Civ. Dei*), that certain men said that Christianity was to last for three hundred and sixty-five years, and that, at the end of that time, it was to cease to exist. Thus, it is no new thing to assign a limit for the duration of Christianity, since this was done even before the time of Augustine. Hence, this is no reason for believing Antichrist to be at hand. St. Augustine says, likewise, (*ibid.*), that, in his time, some men estimated that four hundred years, others that five hundred, were to elapse between the

Ascension of Christ and His second coming. Others, again, reckoned that this period was to embrace a thousand years. But the words of Our Lord, "It is not yours to know the times or the moments," etc. (*Acts i.* 7), expose the folly of all such suppositions. St. Augustine, furthermore, blames the kind of arguments used in such conjectures. He compares them to the hypothesis of some, that, as there were ten plagues of Egypt, so there were to be ten persecutions of the Church. He says, that such opinions are mere human conjectures, established on no foundation of truth. Those who interpret the handwriting on the wall as prophetic of the speedy coming of Antichrist, show their agreement with the Scripture that they reprobate; because, like the Scripture, they say, that the beloved Babylon is soon to be destroyed. But there is no real similitude. For, the handwriting in Babylon, was divinely displayed, and it was, therefore, a proof of the truth: but the writing, of which these would-be prophets speak, is a figment of error, on which no argument can be founded.

They take their other five signs from the signs of which Our Lord speaks in the Gospel of St. Matthew, as portents of His coming.

4. The fourth sign is taken from the words recorded in the Gospel of St. Matthew (*xxiv.* 29): "Then shall they put you to death; and you shall be hated by all nations for my name's sake." This sign is said to be now fulfilled. For, as men will not endure correction, they persecute those holy ones who reprove them, by hatred, by manifold tribulations, and even by death. But, this is no argument at all. For, this sort of persecution befell the Apostles and the martyrs, of whom Our Lord foretold it. Hence, the fact that the

Church suffers persecution at present, is no more proof that the second advent is at hand, than it was in the Apostolic age.

5. The fifth sign is taken from the following words: "Then shall many be scandalised." This prediction is supposed to be fulfilled; because religious are calumniated, and men take scandal thereat. But, this interpretation of the text, is opposed to that of the Gloss, which says: "Men shall be scandalised, *i.e.*, they shall fall from the faith, through fear of the greatness of the torments inflicted on believers." Thus, this prediction was fulfilled at the time of the martyrs. It is nothing new for holy men to be spoken ill of by the impious. Even the Apostles were told (*Matt. v.* 11): "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and speak all that is evil against you untruly." We also read in ecclesiastical history how tyrants caused faithful Christians to be accused of the blackest crimes.

6. The sixth sign is taken from the words: "Many false prophets shall arise, and shall seduce many." We are told that this sign is now manifested: because certain religious appear who are called false prophets; because they commend themselves; and for other reasons, of the same kind. But, this interpretation will be seen to be erroneous if we compare it with the Gloss on the passage in the Gospel of St. Mark (*xiii.*), wherein false prophets are understood to mean heretics, or those, who, after the Passion of Our Lord, and before the destruction of Jerusalem, seduced the Jewish nation. We have, also, already spoken at length on the subject of false prophets.

7. The seventh sign is taken from the words: "Because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold." It is maintained, that we now see the accomplish-

ment of this prediction; inasmuch as, those who seemed to be the most zealous defenders of the Church, forsake the Gospel of Christ, and adhere to the "Eternal Gospel"; whereby they show, that the love which they owe to Christ, has grown cold. But, this statement is untrue. For, those about whom it is made, have not abandoned the Gospel of Christ, and do not profess to believe in any other Gospel. But, granted that the accusation were true, there have been, in all ages, men in the Church, who appeared perfect, and yet originated heresies. We may mention Pelagius, Nestorius, and Eutyches. There have also been many others of the same description. But they did not, therefore, prove that their charity had grown cold. For, although they did not follow the teaching of the Gospel, they did not persecute it. There is no need of persecution, where there is no defender of the truth. Such a persecution would revive extinct errors; and, under pretext of refuting them, would teach them to the people; and this is the greatest of dangers. Hence, St. Gregory says (14 *Moral.*), that, after Eutyches had died leaving no followers, he would not labour to exterminate his errors, lest he should again fan them into flame.

8. The eighth sign is taken from the words: "This gospel of the Kingdom, shall be preached in the whole world." These words are said to be fulfilled in themselves; because they proclaim the signs and dangers which they wish all men to avoid, according to the words of St. Paul (2 *Tim. iv.* 2): "Preach the word; be instant, in season, out of season." We are told that those who do not preach these signs are false apostles, who have not, like the animals mentioned in the Fourth Chapter of the Apocalypse, "eyes before and behind," to know both the future and the past. But this sign

is worth nothing. Even in the early ages of the Church, there were, as ecclesiastical history relates, many who proclaimed similar prophecies, and who were, on this account, reproved by other Catholics of weight. The Gloss on the words, "Many shall come in my name" (*Mark xiii.*) says: "Many, at a time when ruin was imminent, came, proclaiming themselves to be Christs, and falsely declaring that freedom was at hand. And many in the Church, even in the Apostolic ages, threatened the faithful with the speedy coming of the Lord." Hence, they who foretell these signs, are not numbered among those who proclaim the Gospel, but among those who seduce many. Consequently, when Our Lord said, "this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached," He referred, not to the preaching of these vain signs, but to the teaching of the Christian faith which, before His second advent, will be disseminated throughout the whole world. Hence, as St. Augustine proves, in his letter to Hesychius, the day of the Lord could not be in his time at hand, since there still existed nations to which the Gospel had not, as yet, been preached. Those who proclaim this sign, do themselves fall into the snare which they have prepared for others. For they call a certain new doctrine, the Gospel of the Kingdom, and affirm themselves to be the signs which announce the Gospel of the Kingdom. St. Augustine sums up the folly and worthlessness of these five last signs, in the following words: "Perchance, if we diligently compare and examine all that the three Evangelists have said of the coming of Christ, we shall find, that it points to His daily advent in His body the Church, of which coming He said: 'A little while and you shall see the Son of man coming, or sitting'" (*Epist. ad Hesych.*).

CHAPTER XXV

THE OPPONENTS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE STRIVE TO PROVE THAT RELIGIOUS ARE ANTICHRISTS

As the enemies of religious speak much about the dangers which will befall the Church in her latter days, by the instrumentality of those whom they call the emissaries of Antichrist, we will now examine what means they use in order to ascertain who these emissaries of Antichrist will be. They assert that, these seducers will be, neither barbarians, nor Jews, nor Gentiles. But, this opinion is contrary to the prophecy of the Apocalypse: "Satan . . . shall seduce the nations which are over the four quarters of the Earth, Gog and Magog" (*Apoc. xx.* 7). On these words, the Gloss says: "Satan will first seduce these two nations; he will then proceed to deceive others." Or, according to another interpretation, by Magog is understood all persecutors who proceeded, at first by secret, and, afterwards, by open persecution. Hence, barbarians are not excluded from the persecution of Antichrist, as they would persuade us.

But those who affirm that the emissaries of Antichrist will be neither Jews, nor Gentiles, are of opinion that they will be Christians, on account of the words of St. Paul: "Having an appearance indeed of godliness" (2 *Tim. iii.* 5), *i.e.*, as the Gloss explains, "of the Christian religion." They hold, that the words of the

Apostle apply to those, by whose instrumentality evil is to befall the Church in the latter days. But, in this assumption they make a great mistake. For, St. Paul did not mean, that the same men would be guilty of all the vices which he enumerates, but that some of his words would apply to some men, and that other parts of his reproof would be true of other persons. Hence, it is not necessary that all those who are likely to endanger the Church, should present an appearance of piety. It is merely implied that some of them will do so. In like manner, the early Church suffered persecution from believers and unbelievers alike. "In perils from the Gentiles . . . in perils from false brethren" (2 *Cor. xi.* 26).

The emissaries of Antichrist, we are next told, will not be found among the manifestly wicked. This opinion is, however, clearly opposed to the 82nd Psalm (*Deus quis similis erat tibi*). The Gloss explains that the whole of that Psalm treats of the persecution of Antichrist. It adds, that, among his other emissaries, the "Philistines" signify them that are drunk with worldly luxury. St. Gregory, likewise, (20 *Moral.*), expounding the words of Job xxx., "Now I am turned into their song," says: "These are the words of the Church in her latter days, when oppressed by her enemies." Job says, in the same chapter: "The strength of whose hands was to me as nothing, and they were thought unworthy of life." St. Gregory interprets the passages which follow, of those who led manifestly evil and carnal lives.

It is maintained, that the ministers of Antichrist will be found among those who seem to be good men. The proof of this assertion is supposed to exist in the words of Our Lord: "Take heed of false prophets"

(*Matt. vii.* 14), and by other texts of the same nature. But, although some of the emissaries of Antichrist may wear an appearance of piety, it is not necessary, that they shall all seem godly. Christians of the early Church were persecuted, both by the impious, and by the apparently pious.

The argument, that no one can lead another astray, unless he wear an appearance of virtue, is untrue. For, many more are misled by the pleasures of this world, and by fear of its sufferings, than by any seeming godliness.

We are, further, told, that the ministers of Satan will be found among those who devote themselves to study. The proof of this opinion is said to lie in the words of St. Paul, "ever learning and never coming to a knowledge of the truth" (2 *Tim. iii.* 7). The inapplicability of this passage to the point in question, is shown by the fact, that St. Paul was referring, not to men who seduce others, but to silly women who suffer themselves to be led astray. Granted, however, that the words apply to men who mislead others, they can only refer to such, as, in their studies, depart from the way of truth. Hence, the text is often interpreted of heretics. Those who hold a contrary opinion, however, quote in support of it the following words of St. Gregory (13 *Moral.*), on Job xvi.: "Mine enemy hath beheld me with terrible eyes." "The incarnate Truth," says St. Gregory, "chose for His preachers, poor and simple men. But, Antichrist will send, as his Apostles, men who are cunning, and double-tongued, and imbued with the wisdom of the world."

St. Gregory explains in another passage, who will be the learned men whom Antichrist will send. Commenting on the words of Isaias (xviii. 2), "who sendeth

ambassadors upon the sea, and in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters," St. Gregory says: "He sends his ambassadors upon the sea; for he scatters his preachers throughout the world. The 'vessels of bulrushes,' signify the hearts of such as are wise in this world's wisdom. Hence, he that sendeth ambassadors in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters makes his preachers depend upon the wisdom of the world, and lead their vacillating hearers into sin." Therefore, the true preachers of Antichrist, are learned men, who lead worldly lives, and attract men to vice. But even if Antichrist were going to ruin the Church, by means of learned men, it would not be by their agency alone.

We are, further, told that the envoys of Antichrist will be found among those learned men, whose opinion is esteemed as peculiarly weighty and valuable. "As if a man should consult God," it is said of Architophel (2 Kings xvi.). The seducers who will appear in the latter days of the Church are supposed to be typified by Architophel. For, as Architophel adhered, first to David, and then to Absalom; so, they will take part, first with Christ, and then with Antichrist. St. Paul says of them, first, that they will have an appearance of godliness, and then, that they will be, "men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith" (2 *Tim. iii.* 5). Stress is also laid on the words, "they came forth from us" (1 *Ep. John ii.* 19), which mean, as the Gloss says, "they shared with us in the Sacraments." But this quotation is no argument. For, St. Paul does not say of the men to whom he refers, that, at first they wore an appearance of piety, and that then, laying it aside, they became infidels. What he means is, that while these men had a superficial semblance of godliness, they were, at the same time, infidels at heart. There are

many heretics who agree with the Church about the Sacraments; and there are some who receive the Sacraments, at least exteriorly. Even, if, on this account, they are typified by Architophel, that would not make it necessary for them to resemble Architophel in the astuteness of his counsels. This comparison is purely a figment of the imagination; just as the correspondence between the plagues of Egypt and the persecutions of the Church, is imaginary.

It is, likewise, maintained, that the Apostles of Antichrist will be found among those who have vowed to obey the counsels. The ground for this opinion is supposed to exist in the following passage of St. Gregory. Commenting on the words of Job (xxx.), "at the right hand of my rising," St. Gregory says: "Calamities shall arise at the right hand of my rising. For, those who were believed to be chosen members of Christ, now come forward to persecute the Church." These words do not, however, apply, in any special manner, to those who are under an obligation to keep the counsels; for, by the right hand, or the chosen members of Christ, all good men are signified. This we know by the following passage of St. Gregory (*ibid.*): "All the faithful of Holy Church are spoken of under the name of the right hand." Even, however, though perfect men be understood by the expression, "right hand," this is no proof that the passage we have quoted is especially applicable to religious. For, men may be perfect in the order of charity, even though they be married. Prelates, in like manner, are in a state of perfection. Hence, it is not only religious who are meant by the chosen members of Christ. The fallacy contained in this argument makes it easy for us to see that which underlies the ensuing one. The

enemies of religious assert, that religious are the future emissaries of Antichrist, on account of the words: "It will come to pass that Herod will seek the child to destroy him" (*Matt. ii.* 13). The Gloss comments on this passage, thus: "As soon as Christ came into the world, persecution arose against Him—a type of the future persecution of the Saints." From this it is argued, that, as at the coming of Our Lord, He was opposed by those who seemed to be the most wise and holy among men, (to wit the Scribes and Pharisees), so at the end of the world, the faithful of Christ will be attacked by those who will seem to be the best and wisest, viz., by learned and religious men. This argument, however, carries no weight. For, not only the Scribes and Pharisees, but the High priests, Annas and Caiphas, and the civil rulers, Herod and Pilate, persecuted Our Lord. Neither were all those who persecuted Him Scribes; for, some were only Pharisees. Hence, this argument does not prove, that the future persecutors of the Church are to be learned rather than illiterate religious, or religious rather than bishops, or religious rather than secular sovereigns, and dignitaries.

From all the foregoing arguments, then, we are intended to conclude, that the heralds of Antichrist will be Christians, apparently virtuous, devoted to study, strong in giving advice, religious men, bound to the observance of the counsels. Thus, although names are not mentioned, the victims of this infamous charge are as clearly designated as if they were named. If Socrates be the son of Sophroniscus, we mean the same person, whether we speak of him as Socrates, or as the son of Sophroniscus. The mode in which the accusation is brought against religious is inexcusable; and it proves that a personal attack is intended.

We will now refute the calumny point by point.

1. The first error lies in defining the heralds of Antichrist as one race of men, when, as we know by the Gloss on Ps. lxxxii., Antichrists will spring from all classes of men.

2. The second error lies in the fact, that, though diverse authorities may be quoted in support of individual points, no class of men furnishes all the necessary conditions. The emissaries of Satan who will mislead men may, perhaps, exist in great numbers; of which some may be religious, some astute in counsel, some learned, etc. But, perhaps, among all the number, not one will be found possessing all these qualifications.

3. Even were some such men found amongst religious, other such might, likewise, be found amongst men who are not religious. Hence, this argument does not tell more against religious, than against seculars.

4. If some religious are to be emissaries of Antichrist, all religious will not be his adherents. Perhaps very few religious will join Antichrist; as he is to recruit his ranks from all classes of men.

5. It is praiseworthy to be a Christian, a learned man, a prudent counsellor, and a religious. These attributes, therefore, are no reason for concluding, that their possessor is to be a forerunner of Antichrist. Rather, if we are to believe Our Lord's teaching that, "every tree is known by its fruits," (*Matt. vii.*), we ought to expect good works from good men, and evil deeds from wicked men. Guided by this rule, we should look for the future emissaries of Satan among bad men.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ENEMIES OF RELIGIOUS ENDEAVOUR TO CAST SUSPICION UPON SUCH OF THEIR WORKS AS ARE CLEARLY GOOD: *e.g.*, PRAYER AND FASTING

We will now examine, how, although the opponents of religious cannot affirm that certain works performed by them, such as prayer, fasting, and miracles, are evil; they try nevertheless, to represent them in a false light, and to make them appear suspicious.

1. Their first contention is, that certain bad men, mentioned in the Old and in the New Testament, practised these works, in order to disguise their wickedness. "Thus it is said that false prophets will come in sheep's clothing" (*Matt. vii.* 15), "which means," (says the Gloss), "that in the sight of men they will, by their prayers, fastings and almsdeeds, resemble the ministers of justice. But their works will avail them unto nothing, but will, rather, be imputed to them as sin." Again, on the words: "Many will say to me," the Gloss comments: "We must beware of those who work miracles in the name of Christ. Our Lord, certainly, worked them for the sake of unbelievers; but, He warned them not to be deceived, nor to think that a visible miracle is necessarily visible wisdom." From these words, the enemies of religious conclude, that men are not to be accepted, on account, either of their virtues, or of their miracles.

It is, however, easy to see, that this opinion is unsound, because it is opposed to the words of Our Lord (quoted in Matt. v. 16): "Let men see your good works, and glorify your Father," etc. Again (*Matt. xii.*), He says that "a tree is known by its fruits," a good tree by its good, and a bad tree by its bad fruits. St. Peter, likewise, says (*Ep. ii.* 12): "Having your conversation good among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by the good works which they shall behold in you, glorify God in the day of visitation." From these words we see, that good works ought to render a man acceptable to his neighbour. In the same way, a man's miracles render him and his teaching commendable. For, Our Lord says: "For the works which the Father hath given me to perfect . . . give testimony to me" (*John v.* 36). St. Mark, likewise, says, that the Apostles, "preached everywhere, the Lord co-operating with them, and confirming the word with signs that followed" (Mark xvi. 20). These signs were a testimony, both to the men, and to their doctrine.

We do not, of course, say that bad men may not give signs of virtue; we speak only of such things as we are capable of judging. Hence, if a man show signs of goodness, we naturally conclude that he is good; unless he give proofs of wickedness, to show us that the good which he has manifested, did not proceed from him. The Gloss, commenting on the words, "by their fruits you shall know them," says: "Judge of men, not by their clothing but by their works." And again, on the words, "he that eateth," (*Rom. xiv.*), the Gloss remarks: "There are certain things, such as blasphemy, theft, and the like, which cannot proceed from a virtuous soul. It is permissible for us to judge

of such matters as these; for they come under the category of which Christ spoke saying: 'By their fruits you shall know them.' But, in doubtful matters, let us put the most favourable construction on our neighbour's doings." Thus, the authors quoted, would have us not to be so deceived by good appearances, as to be led away by them into evil or error. But, if anyone who does not seek to seduce others into vice or error, be judged on account of his acts to be a good man, although he be in reality wicked, this deception is not a dangerous one; for it does not belong to man to judge the secrets of the heart. On the words, "Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light," (2 *Cor. xi.* 14), the Gloss says: "If Satan feigns to do, or to say something befitting the good angels, and we even believe him to be himself a good angel, our error will not be harmful, or even dangerous. But, if the devil begin to tempt us by works not his own, we have need of great watchfulness, lest we be led astray."

The enemies of religious proceed still further in their malice, and declare, that the manifest good works done by religious are hypocrisy. Thus, they say, religious commit a heinous crime. But, they themselves herein resemble the Pharisees, who said to Our Lord when He was casting out a devil: "By Beelzebub, the prince of devils, He casteth out devils" (Matt. xii. and Luke xi. 15). They act like the Pharisees, who, as soon as they see another do a good work, ascribe it to hypocrisy. It was to rebuke such judgments, that Christ said (*Matt. xii.* 33): "By their fruits you shall know them."

It is easy to see how much harm such assertions may do. For, if the opinion that a man is to be esteemed a hypocrite, on account of his good works, be generally

accepted, persons will be withheld from performing any acts of virtue ; and the same will be the case, if everyone be called a hypocrite who embraces a state of perfection after committing great sins. St. Gregory (31 *lib. Moral.*), combats this idea. For, commenting on the words, "she hath laboured in vain, no fear constraining her," (*Job xxxix.*), he writes as follows. "We must remember that our mother the Church nurses certain souls in her tender bosom, until she brings them to spiritual maturity. But, such souls have not, as yet, acquired the habit of holiness, nor are they, as yet, strong enough to follow the path of perfection." "But," he continues, "we have no right to call such men hypocrites ; for weakness is one thing, and malice is another." Thus, according to the teaching of St. Gregory, they only deserve to be called hypocrites who undertake to perform works of perfection in order thereby to cloak their wickedness, and to be able, the more easily, to injure others. Those who, through weakness, may chance to fall into sin, even after embracing a life of perfection, are not hypocrites.

EPILOGUE

Now that, by the Divine assistance, we have refuted the calumnies of malicious men, it becomes evident, that there is no condemnation for such as are in Christ Jesus, who walk, not according to the flesh, but who carry the cross of the Lord, repressing earthly desires. Much might still be said in confutation of the detractors of religious. But we will leave them to the Divine judgment; since the malice of their heart is clearly revealed by the speech that falls from their lips. To quote the words of Christ (*Matt. xii.* 34): "How can you speak good things, whereas you are evil? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." But if, as St. Paul says, (2 *Tim. ii.* 21), "any man, therefore, shall cleanse himself from these" (*i.e.* by not consenting to these malicious judgments), "he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and profitable unto the Lord, prepared unto every good work" (2 *Tim. ii.*).

Those, however, who adopt the opinions of these enemies of religious, will blindly follow the blind; and with them will fall into the ditch. But the words which we have spoken will suffice to preserve us from such a fate, if they be sanctified by the blessing of God, to whom be honour and giving of thanks, world without end. Amen.

Part II

REFUTATION OF THE PERNICIOUS TEACHING OF THOSE WHO WOULD DETER MEN FROM ENTERING RELIGIOUS LIFE

Opusculum XVII. (Parma Edition III.)

CHAPTER I

THE OBJECT OF THE AUTHOR IN UNDERTAKING THIS WORK

THE religion of Christ appears to aim chiefly at diverting the attention of mankind from material things, in order to concentrate their thoughts on such as are spiritual. Therefore did Jesus, "the Author and finisher of our faith," at His coming into this world, propose to His faithful followers the contempt of earthly things. He taught this lesson both by His life and by His words. He taught it by His life. To quote St. Augustine (*De Catechizandis Rudibus*), "the Lord Jesus, when He became man, despised the good things of earth, in order to show that they are contemptible. He, likewise, endured all those earthly trials which He has bidden us to bear, that so, from the chances of this world, we may neither expect happiness, nor fear unhappiness. He rejected all appearance of noble birth; for, although at the time of His conception the virginity of His Mother was intact, and although she remained for ever inviolate, yet was she espoused to a carpenter. He willed not that any should glory in the splendour of an earthly city; therefore was He born in Bethlehem, the least of the cities of Juda. He to whom all things belong, and by whom all things are made, became poor, that so none of them that should believe in Him, might dare

to be lifted up by earthly wealth. He came to point out the way of humility; therefore, would He not be chosen King by men. He who giveth meat to all, Himself did hunger. He by whom all manner of drink was created, was athirst. He, who has made Himself our road to Heaven, was weary and way-worn. He, who has set a term to our sufferings, Himself was crucified. He died, who raised the dead.

The same lesson did He inculcate by His words. For, at the very beginning of His preaching, He promised to them that should repent, not an earthly Kingdom, such as in the Old Testament they had been bidden to look for, but the Kingdom of Heaven. Not only did He teach His disciples that the first Beatitude consists in poverty of spirit, but He further pointed out, that it is in this same poverty, that all perfection consists. To the young man seeking the Kingdom of Heaven He said, (*Matt. xix.* 21), "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and follow Me."

His disciples followed in this road of poverty. Owning nothing temporally, by spiritual virtue they possessed all things; and having only what to eat and wherewith to be clothed, they were content. But Satan, in his jealousy of our salvation, has never, since the earliest ages, ceased from hindering men in the holy and salutary exercise of poverty. For this purpose he has made use of carnal men, enemies of the Cross of Christ, and savouring of the things of this world. St. Augustine, in his work *De Agone Christiano*, says: "Men and women of all ages, and every rank, are attracted to the beauty of eternal life. Some, to the neglect of their temporal interests, give themselves wholly to divine things. Others yield the

palm to the virtue of those that act in this wise, and praise the deeds which they themselves lack courage to imitate. But some few there are, who, at the sight of such deeds, murmur and fret in impotent rage. These can scarcely be called Catholics; they are rather self-seekers, trying to serve their own interests by means of the Church; or else, they are heretics, striving to glorify themselves in the name of Christ."

Among this number, in former years, two men arose, in different places indeed, but infected by the same folly. Jovinian appeared in Rome, and Vigilantius in Gaul—both of which places had hitherto been free from the pestilence of error. Jovinian dared to set matrimony on a level with virginity. Vigilantius asserted that wealth was as meritorious as poverty.

By this manifest perfidy, they stultified, as far as they were able, the evangelical and apostolic counsels. For, if wealth be equal to poverty, and matrimony to virginity, it was futile for Our Lord to have given us the counsel to observe poverty, or for his Apostle to have recommended us to preserve virginity. By this argument, the great doctor St. Jerome has effectually refuted both the false teachers whom we have named.

But, just as one of the heads of the beast mentioned in the Apocalypse, was, "as it were slain to death, and his death-wound was healed," so in Gaul followers of Vigilantius have reappeared, who, by means of ingenuity and cunning, deter men from the observance of the counsels. Their first axiom is that no one ought, by entering the religious life, to undertake to practise the counsels, unless he be already exercised in the observance of the commandments. This regulation would exclude from the way of perfection, all children, all sinners, and all recent converts to the Faith.

Their next dictum is, that no one ought to undertake the observance of the counsels, without first seeking advice from many persons. We see, at once, that this rule would be a great obstacle in the way of those that desire to embrace perfection, since the advice of carnal men, (who form the majority of mankind), tends rather to deter souls from spirituality than to draw them to it. Further, these followers of Vigilantius try to hinder men from laying themselves under an obligation to embrace religious life, though such an obligation strengthens the soul to embrace a life of perfection. Finally, they do not hesitate to take every means to diminish in men's hearts the love of poverty.

These criminal efforts are prefigured in the words of Pharao, who, as we read in Exodus (v. 4), when chiding Moses and Aaron for trying to lead the people of God out of Egypt, said to them, "Why do you, Moses and Aaron, draw off the people from their works?" Origen in his Gloss, thus comments on this passage: "To-day, likewise, should Moses and Aaron, that is to say, a prophetic and priestly word, call a soul to serve God, and, leaving the world and renouncing all possessions, to devote itself to the law of God and the hearing of His word, you will hear the friends of Pharao saying: 'See how men are seduced, and young men led astray.'" Origen adds, in another place: "These were the words of Pharao; and in like manner do his friends speak to-day." Such are the maxims, whereby they seek to hinder them that aim at perfection. But, to quote the proverb of Solomon, "There is no counsel against the Lord." Trusting, therefore, in the help of spiritual arms, which are the power of God, we will endeavour to refute the opinions which

we have quoted, and to overthrow the presumption of such as exalt themselves against the Divine Wisdom.

We will treat of each of the foregoing propositions in the following manner. First, we will state on what foundation they are based. Then, we will examine in what particulars, and in what manner, each of the aforesaid propositions is repugnant to truth, which is in harmony with piety. And, thirdly, we will demonstrate, that the arguments used in support of these propositions, are empty and frivolous.

CHAPTER II

ARGUMENTS USED BY THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THAT NONE SHOULD BE ADMITTED TO THE RELIGIOUS LIFE WHO ARE NOT PRACTISED IN THE EXERCISE OF THE COMMANDMENTS

THE followers of Vigilantius strive, by sundry arguments, to prove that none should undertake to follow the Counsels, unless they are already exercised in obedience to the Commandments. First, they remind us that Our Saviour when He gave the Counsel of poverty, told the young man that if he desired to enter into life, he must keep the Commandments, and only when the youth professed to have kept the Commandments, did Christ give him the Counsel concerning poverty. This shows, they say, that obedience to the Commandments ought to precede observance of the Counsels. Again they bring forward, in defence of their opinion, the words of Jesus Christ (*Matt. xxviii.* 20), "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." They also quote the following commentary of Bede upon this Text: "The order herein commanded to be observed is equitable. For, first, a hearer must be taught; he must then be initiated into the mysteries of the Faith; and, finally, he must be instructed in the keeping of the Commandments." From these words the conclusion is drawn

that obedience to the Commandments must go before the practice of the Counsels.

They further allege in favour of their views, the verse of *Psalm cxviii.*, "By thy commandments I have had understanding." They cite too the words of the Gloss, "I say not that I have understood thy Commandments themselves, but that by them I have had understanding; for by keeping the Commandments, David attained to sublime wisdom." The verse of Ps. xxx. is also quoted in the same sense, "As a child that is weaned is towards his mother," with the following commentary upon this text, which occurs in the Gloss, "As in physical so also in spiritual procreation and nourishment five periods occur. First we are conceived in the womb; we are nourished therein until we see the light; we are then carried in the arms of our mother, and suckled with her milk, until, being weaned, we are seated at the table of our father." The Gloss then adds: "Holy Church, likewise, observes these five periods." For the child of the Church is, so to speak, conceived on the Wednesday of the fourth week.[1] He

[1] An allusion to a practice of the Church in the early ages which is now obsolete. On the Wednesday of the Fourth week of Lent the "Scrutinium baptizandorum," or examination of those who were to be baptised on Holy Saturday, took place. This ceremony was a very solemn one, and was announced to the people on the previous Sunday. The Catechumens stood at the church doors, the men on the right, and the women on the left. They were asked by the deacon or priest whether they wished to be baptised, the exorcist having first questioned them as to whether they renounced Satan, his works, and his pomps. Then they were examined in the Lord's prayer and the Creed, which they were obliged to know by heart. If the examination proved satisfactory, they were introduced into the nave of the church with a view to their being baptised on the Eve of Easter Day. As the Gloss expresses it in the text, they were thus "conceived on the Wednesday of the Fourth week." Then, after further instruction, they were "born into spiritual light on Holy

is, by exorcism and catechism, initiated in the rudiments of the Christian Faith. He is nourished in the womb of the Church, until, on Holy Saturday, he is, by baptism, born into spiritual light. Then, until Pentecost, he may be said to be carried in the arms of the Church, and fostered at her breast; for, during this season nothing laborious is enjoined, neither rising by night, nor fasting.[1] But after he has been confirmed by the Holy Spirit, the Christian is weaned, and begins to fast, and to observe other toilsome practices. But, (say the followers of Vigilantius), many reverse this order. Such are heretics and schismatics, who, prematurely forsake their mother's milk, and, therefore, come to nought. As it is more difficult to practise the Counsels than to keep the Commandments, it is reversing the right order of things, for a man who is not exercised in obedience to the Commandments to undertake to observe the Counsels. Such an error may end in heresy or schism.

They strive, further, to strengthen this argument, by the order observed by our Saviour in the miracles whereby He fed the multitudes. For, first, as we read in *St. Matt. xiv.*, He fed five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes; and, then, in *St. Matt. xv.* we see that He fed four thousand men with seven loaves

Saturday," *i.e.* they were baptised. For the details of this ceremony the reader is referred to Durandus, "Rationale Divinorum Officiorum," cap. 56, page 208, and also "Explicatio Divinorum Officiorum," cap. 90, page 348 (Edit. Venice, 1609).—EDITOR.

[1] In many religious orders the members rise at midnight to sing, or recite, matins,—"I arose in the middle of the night to confess to thee" (Ps. 118)—but from Easter to Pentecost the midnight office is suspended, and matins are either anticipated or postponed. No fasting days occur between Easter Sunday and the Eve of Pentecost. —EDITOR.

and seven little fishes. By the five thousand men, are meant those, who, living a secular life, know how to make good use of material possessions; but the four thousand, fed by seven loaves, signify those who renounce the world completely, and are nourished on evangelical perfection and spiritual grace. Hence we are to learn, that men must first be sustained by obedience to the Commandments, and, afterwards, led to the perfection of the Counsels.

Another argument, brought forward by those who follow Vigilantius, is contained in the words of St. Jerome on the beginning of the Gospel of St. Matthew. "The Holy Gospel," he says, "is composed of four elements, to wit, precepts, commandments, testimonies, examples. Justice appears in the precepts; charity in the commandments; faith in the testimonies; perfection in the examples." From this passage they conclude, that it is from the justice of the precepts that we are to attain to the perfection of the examples, which perfection would seem to consist in the Counsels.

They further bring forward the following passage of St. Gregory (VI. *Moral.*): "It was after the embrace of Lia, that Jacob came to Rachel; for the perfect man is first engaged in the fruitfulness of active life, and afterwards attains to the repose of contemplation." Now the religious state, which professes the practice of the Counsels, belongs to the contemplative life. But the Commandments lead us to the active life. The Gloss says, concerning the passage in *St. Matt. xix.* wherein the Commandments of the Law are enumerated: "Behold the active life." But, when it comments on those words of Our Lord in the same chapter, "If thou wilt be perfect" etc., the Gloss adds: "Behold the contemplative life." Therefore, it is not meet that

a man should embrace the religious life, unless, by keeping the Commandments, he has first been exercised in the active life.

Another argument, adduced by the disciples of Vigilantius in the defence of their cause, is contained in the commentary of St. Gregory on Ezechiel: "No one becomes perfect at once. In true conversion a man must begin with the least things, in order that he may attain to great things." Now, the Commandments of the Decalogue would appear to be the lesser things, but the Counsels, which pertain to perfection, the greater. For St. Augustine, in his book *De sermone Domini in Monte*, says: "The things commanded by the Law are lesser; those which Christ was to command, were greater." Let no man, therefore, proceed to the observance of the greater things, to wit, the practice of the Counsels, unless he be first exercised in the lesser, that is to say, in keeping the Commandments. Again, St. Gregory says (in *Decretis, dist.* 48, *cap.* SICUT): "While walls are still new and damp, we know that they cannot bear weight; and if a roof be placed upon them before they be dry, the whole building will fall to the ground." Again, among the sayings of St. Gregory, we find the following: "He courts a fall who despising steps, attempts to climb a height by a steep ascent." Whence they conclude, that it is dangerous for anyone to presume to attain to the high perfection of the counsels, unless he be first exercised in lesser things, that is to say in the Commandments.

Those who hold this opinion, further observe, that the Commandments, even in the order of nature, precede the counsels, for they are more common and more in harmony with nature. The Commandments

can be kept together with the Counsels, but the Counsels cannot be practised apart from the Commandments. Hence, it cannot be well ordered, to aspire to the Counsels, unless the observance of the Commandments has gone first. Those who are of this opinion further add, that, if it were right that the Counsels should take precedence over the Commandments, those who did not practise the Counsels, could not be saved, for they would not be keeping the Commandments.

These are the chief arguments used by such as hold that religious life should not be attempted by any, save those who are exercised in obedience to the Commandments.

CHAPTER III

THE FOREGOING ARGUMENTS DO NOT HOLD GOOD IN THE CASE OF CHILDREN

SINCE this question regards morals, our first consideration must be whether what has been said, is congruous with good works. We must prove, first of all, that the doctrine of the followers of Vigilantius is utterly opposed to such works. For there are three classes of mankind who have had no practice in keeping the Commandments. The first class is composed of children who have not had time to be exercised in keeping them. The second class includes recent converts to the Faith, who, before, their conversion, have had no opportunity of observing the Commandments, "for all that is not of faith, is sin" (*Rom xiv.* 23), and, "without faith it is impossible to please God" (*Heb. xi.* 6). The third class of men who have not been in the habit of keeping the Commandments, are they that have led a sinful life.

Now we shall show, in the case of each of these classes, the fallacy of the arguments which we have undertaken to refute.

If it were necessary that the observance of the Commandments should precede the practice of the Counsels and the entrance into the religious life, it would not be right, nor would the Church suffer parents to place their young children in religious houses, there

to be educated in the exercise of the Counsels before they have kept the Commandments. But we know that such is her custom, a usage supported by grave authority, and confirmed by many passages of Scripture. St. Gregory says (XX. *Quaestione* I. *cap.* ADDIDISTIS): "Is it lawful for a father or mother who have placed an infant son or daughter in a monastery to be there educated in regular discipline, to withdraw such a child when it has attained the age of puberty, and to give it in marriage? This question we will not discuss." The question as to how far the obligation to regular observance is perpetually binding, is not of great importance; for, if the practice of keeping the Commandments were a necessary introduction to the observance of the Counsels, no one could be educated in the regular observance of the Counsels, who was not exercised in obedience to the Commandments. But the custom of dedicating children to the religious life is proved, not merely by many ecclesiastical statutes, but by the examples of the Saints. St. Gregory relates (*Dialog. Book* II.) that "noble and religious men of the City of Rome flocked to blessed Benedict, to offer him their children to be trained for Almighty God. Then, Euticius and Patricius Tertullus gave him their promising sons, Maurus and Placidus, of whom Maurus, the younger, being distinguished by his virtues, became assistant to the master, while Placidus was still, in disposition, a child." And, as St. Gregory narrates in the same book, Blessed Benedict himself, while still a child, being desirous to please none but God, turned his back on worldly learning, and, leaving his parents' house, sought the usages of holy conversation.

This custom took its rise from the Apostles themselves. Dionysius, in the end of his book *Eccles. Hierarch.*,

says, "children, brought up to sublime things, and kept apart from sin and error, will acquire the habit of holy living. This was the opinion of our blessed masters, and it seemed good to them to receive children." Dionysius, it is true, is here only alluding to the admission of children to Baptism, but his argument bears out our assertion, viz. that it is expedient to educate children in the principles which they are hereafter to practise, in order that they may acquire the habit of them. We must add, further, that this rule is authorised by Our Lord Himself. For we read in *St. Matt. xix.* 13, "Then were little children presented to Him, that He should impose hands upon them and pray. And the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said to them: 'Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.'" St. Chrysostom, commenting on these words, says, "Who shall deserve to draw nigh to Christ, if innocent childhood is driven from Him? If these children are to be saints, why should they not approach their Father? If they are to be sinners, why should you pronounce sentence of condemnation upon them, before their crimes are committed?" Now, we know that it is by the way of the Counsels, that man approaches most closely to Christ, for He said to the young man, "Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor and follow me" (*Matt. xix.* 21). Therefore, children, are, by no means, to be hindered from drawing near to Him by the way of the Counsels. But, as Origen says, on the same passage: "Some there are, who, before they have learnt the doctrine of justice, rebuke those, who, by simple teaching, offer to Christ infants and children, that is to say the unlearned. Our

Lord exhorted His disciples, who were then grown men, to condescend to the service of children, and to be, so to speak, children with children, that so they might gain children, for 'of such,' He said, 'is the Kingdom of Heaven.' And He Himself, when He was in the form of God, became a child. We ought to bear this in mind, lest, in our esteem for our own superior wisdom we should despise the little ones of the Church, forbidding the children to go to Jesus."

We may remember, again, how in *St. Luke i.* 80 it is written of St. John the Baptist, "And the child grew, and was strengthened in spirit; and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel." Bede comments on this text, in the following words: "He, who was to be the preacher of penance, passed his early years in the desert. He acted thus, in order, more easily, to draw his hearers, by means of his instructions, from the vanities of the world. He would not, as St. Gregory of Nyssa says, suffer himself to become accustomed to the allurements of the senses, lest he should be misled or perplexed in his judgment, concerning the true good. And, because he was pure, and because, from the beginning of his life to the end, he offered to the divine regard desires free from every passion, therefore he was raised to such a height of grace that he received gifts surpassing those of the prophets." Therefore, not only is it lawful but even most expedient in order to obtain greater grace, that some men, leaving the world, even in their childhood, should live in the solitude of the religious life.

We read in *Lamentations iii.* 27, "It is good for a man, when he hath borne the yoke from his youth." The reason given for these words being, "he shall sit solitary and hold his peace, because he hath taken it

up upon himself."[1] By this we are given to understand, that, they who bear the yoke of religious life from their youth upwards, arise above themselves and are rendered more fit for religious observance, which consists in silence, and freedom from worldly care and disturbance. In the *Book of Proverbs xxii.* 6 the words occur, "A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it." Hence, St. Anselm in his book *De Similitudinibus* compares those who have been brought up in monasteries to angels, while those who have been converted from an imperfect life he likens to men. This mode of thinking is not only confirmed by the authority of Holy Scripture, it is shared even by philosophers; for Aristotle in his *Second Book of Ethics* says, "It is, by no means, a matter of small moment, whether from our youth we are accustomed to such or such a manner of life, but, on the contrary, it is of supreme importance, that certain men, should, from childhood, be instructed in those things which they must observe during the course of their life." Again, in the *Eighth book of his Politics,* the same philosopher writes: "The chief concern of a legislator ought to be for the education of the young who should be trained in every good quality."

We see, likewise, how this opinion is, practically, borne out by society; for men are, from their very childhood, brought up to those professions and offices for which they are destined. Those who are intended

[1] The English version of this text is somewhat vague. *Sedebit solitarius et tacebit, quia levabit se super se,* is rendered, "He shall sit solitary and hold his peace because *he hath taken it up upon himself.*" St. Thomas interprets it as meaning, "he shall arise above himself," *i.e.* above nature and nature's promptings. It implies the supernatural life of grace.—EDITOR.

for clerics, must, from their tender years, be educated in the clerical life; soldiers, as Vegetius says in his book *De re militari*, must, in early years, be subjected to military discipline; and, carpenters must, from childhood, learn their handicraft. Why then should the only exception to this rule be made with regard to the religious life? Why should not the young be formed to it from their youth? Surely the more arduous a profession may be, the more necessary it is, that men should be early trained to it. Hence we see, that the argument, that it is necessary to be practised in keeping the Commandments before we observe the Counsels, does not hold good with regard to children.

CHAPTER IV

THE OPINION HELD BY VIGILANTIUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS DOES NOT APPLY TO RECENT CONVERTS TO THE FAITH

VERY few words will suffice to show the absurdity of refusing the religious habit to recent converts, on the ground that they are not exercised in the observance of the Commandments. The first followers of Christ, who formed His college, and who gave an example of perfection, far surpassing that of any religious order, were received by Our Lord immediately after their conversion. St. Paul, who was the last by conversion, but the foremost in preaching, embraced evangelical perfection as soon as he was converted to the faith. This we know by his own words to the Galatians: "But when it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother's womb, and exalted me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I condescended not to flesh and blood" (*Gal. i.* 15). Christ teaches us the same lesson by His own example. We read, in *St. Matt. iv.* 1, that, after His baptism, He "was led by the Spirit into the desert." "Thus," says the Gloss, "did He teach those that have been baptised, to leave the world after their baptism, and to devote themselves to God in solitude."

This teaching is confirmed by the praiseworthy

practice of many, who, being once converted from unbelief, immediately assume the religious habit. Who would be so ill-advised as to counsel these men rather to stay in the world, than to withdraw into the Religious life, there to endeavour to preserve the Baptismal Grace which they have received? What right-minded man would dissuade them from putting on Christ by perfect imitation, when by baptism they have already been clothed with Him? The argument that no one ought to be admitted to the religious life who has not kept the Commandments, is, thus, an absurdity, in the case of recent converts to the Faith.

CHAPTER V

THIS ARGUMENT IS EQUALLY FALLACIOUS AS APPLIED TO PENITENT SINNERS

FINALLY, let us see whether penitent sinners, who are not yet exercised in observing the Commandments, are to be excluded from religious life. The example of St. Matthew is germane to our question. Our Lord called him from the receipt of custom to be His follower; and Matthew, although not at once admitted to the number of the Apostles, immediately embraced the perfection of the counsels, for, "leaving all things he rose up and followed him" (*Luke v.* 28). "He who had robbed others, abandoned his own possessions," says St. Ambrose. From this example, it is abundantly evident, that penitents may, even after most heinous sins, enter on the observance of the Counsels. In fact, we may go further, and say, that, it is meet that such repentant sinners should embrace a life of perfection; for, as St. Gregory says, in his comment on the words of St. Luke iii., "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of penance": "He that has committed no unlawful act, may rightfully be granted the enjoyment of lawful things. But he that has fallen into sin, ought to deprive himself of lawful goods, in proportion as he is conscious of having committed unlawful deeds." Again, he says: "It is fitting that, if a man has im-

poverished himself by sin, he should, so much the more eagerly, seek by penance the riches of good works." Since, then, in the religious life, men abstain even from lawful things, and seek the treasure of perfection, it is reasonable that they who abandon sin (whereby they have been exercised, not in the practice, but in the transgression of the Commandments,) should walk in the way of the Counsels, by entering religion, which is the state of true penance. Again we find, *in quaest.* XXXIII. *cap.* II. *Admonere,* that Pope Stephen, addressing a certain Astulphus, who had been guilty of great sins, says: "May our advice be pleasing to you. Go into a monastery: humble yourself to the Abbot; and, helped by the prayers of many brethren, perform, in simplicity of heart, whatever may be enjoined upon you." "But," he continues: "if you prefer to remain in your house, or in the world, and there to do public penance, (which will be far more onerous and painful for you), we will tell you how you are to act." The Pope then imposes severe penances upon him, telling him, at the same time, that it would be better, and more advantageous, for him to go into religion.

Thus, we see, that those who are practised, not in keeping the Commandments but in sinning against them, are advised to embrace religious life. Such penitent sinners are, however, deterred from so doing by the admirable wisdom of certain advisers, whose counsel St. Paul thus refutes: "I speak a human thing because of the infirmity of your flesh, for, as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity; so now yield your members to serve justice unto sanctification" (*Rom. vi.* 19). "I speak

a human thing," comments the Gloss, "because you owe more service to justice than to sin." And Baruch says (*chap. iv.* 28), "As it was your mind to go astray from God; so, when you return again, you shall seek him ten times as much." For, after sinning, and thus forsaking God, and disobeying His commands, a man ought to strive after the highest virtue, and not be content with half measures.

This teaching is borne out by the example of numerous saints. For many, of both sexes, after leading lives of crime, have embraced the practice of the Counsels, and although they had formed no habit of keeping the Commandments, have devoted themselves to the observance of the strictest religious rule. Their conduct is approved even by philosophers. In the Second book of Ethics Aristotle writes: "When we withdraw from great sin, we shall come to the uniform line, even as they do who plane away the knots from wood." For those who are knotted by sin, must be brought back to righteousness by practising the more perfect works of virtue.

Thus we have made it clear, that the opinion of those who maintain that none should practise the Counsels who have not kept the Commandments, cannot be approved, with regard to any class of men.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUNDAMENTAL ERROR OF THESE OPINIONS EXPOSED

In order to refute this error, once and for all, we must examine the fallacy on which it is based. Now, the premises on which the followers of Vigilantius construct their argument are erroneous, and for this reason. They assume that perfection consists, chiefly, in the observance of the Counsels; and that the Commandments, compared to the Counsels, are as the imperfect compared to the perfect. Therefore, they say, we must go from Commandments to Counsels, as from imperfection to perfection. But this proposition is false. We know from the very words of Our Lord (*Matt. xxii.* 37), that the first and chief commandment of the Law is the love of God and of our fellow-men. "The first commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The perfection of the Christian life consists, essentially, in obeying these two precepts. Hence, the Apostle says to the Colossians (*iii.* 14), "But above all these things, have charity, which is the bond of perfection." On this passage the Gloss observes, that charity makes other things perfect, in so far, that is to

say, as they are ordered in charity. For charity binds all things together. Again, when Our Lord had been giving the precepts of brotherly love, (Matt. v. 48), He added, "Be ye therefore perfect as also your Heavenly Father is perfect."

St. Jerome says, commenting on the words in St. Matt. xix. 27, "Behold, we have left all things and have followed thee": "Whereas it does not suffice to have left all things, he (Peter) adds, 'and have followed thee.' For the Apostles followed the Lord not so much in bodily presence, as in affections of the heart." Again, St. Ambrose, alluding to the words, "follow me" (Luke v.), says: "Christ commands him (Levi) to follow Him, not with his feet, but with the desires of his mind." It is thus abundantly evident, that the perfection of the Christian life consists in charity towards God. And there is a very solid reason for this conclusion. The perfection of anything consists, as we know, in its attainment of its end. Now, the end of the Christian life is that charity, to which all things must be ordered, and which, as St. Paul says (1 *Tim. i.* 5), is "the end of the commandment," or, as the Gloss says, in its comment on this text, "is the perfection of the precept, that is to say of all precepts, for the love of God and of our neighbour is the fulfilment of all."

It behoves us to distinguish, in our judgment, between an end, and the means to an end. In considering the means to an end, we must fix some certain measure, by which the means may be proportioned to the end. But, in what regards the end itself, there is no question of measure, but each one prosecutes his end to the best of his ability. A physician tempers his

remedies, lest they should be in excess. He has no fear of excess in the health which he wishes to restore by those remedies, but he desires that such health should be as perfect as possible. In like manner, the commandment to love God, which is the end of the Christian life, knows no limits. No one can say that this degree or that, of the love of God is enjoined by this precept, or, that where the love of God exceeds the Commandment it becomes a Counsel. Every man is bound to love God as much as he can. This truth is embodied in the very words of the precept: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart." Every one must obey this commandment, according to his ability, some with greater, and some with less perfection. He totally fails to observe it, who does not, in his affections, prefer God before all things. He that loves Him as His last End, above all other things, fulfils the precept, either more or less perfectly, according as he is more or less impeded by his affection for created things. St. Augustine says (*Lib.* LXXXIII. *Quaest.*): "The poison of charity is the hope of acquiring or retaining temporal things. That is to say, if such things be looked on as a last end. The food of charity is the lessening of cupidity. Its perfection consists in the extinction of earthly desire."

But there is another perfect manner of observing this precept, which cannot be achieved in this life. For, as St. Augustine says in his book *De Perfectione Justitiae*, "In that fulness of charity which will reign in our heavenly country, the precept of charity, 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart,' etc., will be perfectly obeyed." "Why," he continues, "should not this perfection be anticipated by man,

although, in this life, he may not attain to it? He does not run aright, who knows not whither he is running. But how can he know, if he be not taught by any precepts?" Therefore, to this, as to their end, are directed the commandments of love of God and of our neighbour, together with all other counsels and commands. Hence, St. Augustine says in *Ench.*: "God gives us certain commandments, such as: 'thou shalt not commit adultery'; and other things such as: 'It is good *for a man* not to touch a woman,' are not enjoined on us by precept, but set before us as a spiritual counsel. Such things are rightly done, when they are referred to the love of God, and to the love of our neighbour, for His sake."

Nevertheless, the manner in which the precept of Charity is to be fulfilled by certain precepts of the Law, is different to that in which it is to be accomplished by the Counsels. For some things are so designed to a particular end, that the end cannot be attained without them. Such is the case with food and the maintenance of life. Other things, again, serve to attain an end with peculiar certainty and completeness. Thus, though food is necessary for the continuance of physical life, medicine serves for the more easy and certain preservation of health. Now, some of the commandments are given for the first of these two reasons, namely as a necessary means of attaining to charity. For instance, no one can fulfil the precept of charity who worships false gods, and thus withdraws from the love of God, or who commits murder, or theft, which are contrary to the love of our neighbour. But the Counsels are given to us, in order that we may fulfil the precept of charity, in the

second way of which we have spoken. Hence, the Apostle, speaking of the Counsel of virginity, expressly says that its object is to enable us to love God. "He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife" (1 *Cor. vii.* 32).

Again, we see from St. Matt. xix., that our Lord gave the Counsel of poverty, as a means whereby He was to be followed; and following Him, as we have shown, consists in charity. Now charity is lessened by cupidity, but cupidity, and love of money, is diminished, or wholly eradicated, by the renunciation of earthly possessions. St. Augustine, in his Epistle to Paulinus and Therasia, says that, "our love for the goods that we have acquired, is much stronger than our desires for those that we do not possess. It is one thing, indeed, to have no will to gain those things that are lacking to us, but quite another to divest ourselves of those that we already possess." Both these Counsels are, also, intended to facilitate charity towards our neighbour. All that Our Lord lays down in St. Matt. v. about brotherly love, ought to be the abiding disposition of the soul. And it is clear, that His precepts on this head, will be most easily obeyed by the man who is not hampered by self-interest. He who has no will to possess anything, will be better prepared to part with his coat and his cloak, than he who desires possessions.

Since charity is not only the end, but also the foundation of all virtues, and of all the precepts given us for the attainment of virtue, it follows, that, as by

means of the Counsels man advances towards the more perfect love of God and of his neighbour, so, likewise, the more perfect observance of the Counsels is furthered by obedience to those Commandments which are necessary to charity. He who has the intention of practising continence or poverty for the love of Christ, is a long way from committing adultery or theft. The various exercises of the religious life, such as watching, fasting, and retirement from worldly affairs, tend, furthermore, to preserve man from vice, and to facilitate his practice of perfect virtue. Thus, the observance of the Counsels, leads to the observance of the other Commandments. Of course, we do not mean that keeping the Commandments is the end proposed by those who practise the Counsels. No one, for instance, embraces virginity in order that he may abstain from adultery, or leads a life of poverty, as a safeguard against theft; but the Counsels are practised as a means of advancing in the love of God and of our neighbour. For, greater things are not made for lesser ones as their end. From all this it becomes clear, that the Counsels pertain to perfection of life, not because perfection necessarily consists in their observance, but because they are the way, or means, to perfection. St. Augustine bears this out when, in his book, *De moribus Ecclesiae*, he says, speaking of the life of religious, "Let all our endeavour be to restrain concupiscence, and to preserve brotherly love." Again, in the same work, he writes, "Charity is there, (in religious life), chiefly cultivated: virtue, words, manner, countenance, all are agreeable to charity."

Again, in the *Collatio patrum*, the Abbot Moses says, "For this (to wit for the sake of purity of heart and charity), we do and suffer all things, and on this account

we renounce kinsfolk, country, honours, riches and all manner of earthly joy. To gain these virtues we undertake fasting, watching, labour, and nakedness; and for these we practise reading, and all other virtues. For, we desire to prepare our hearts and to keep them pure from defiling thoughts, and, by these means, to rise to the perfection of charity." Hence, we learn that obedience to the Commandments may be either perfect or imperfect, according as we practise a more or less perfect means of keeping them. For we may, as we have shown, practise by means of the Counsels, perfect obedience to the Commandments; or we may, by living in the world without the Counsels, keep them imperfectly.

Therefore, to teach that a man must first be exercised in keeping the Commandments, before he passes to the Counsels, is tantamount to saying, that he must first obey the Commandments imperfectly, rather than, at once, strive to keep them perfectly. This is, of course, an absurdity, whether we consider the Commandments themselves, or the mode of observing them. For, who could be so foolish, as to dissuade a man from loving God and his neighbour perfectly, by bidding him first to love them imperfectly? Is not such a fallacy condemned by the divine precept of charity: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart"? Or, need we fear lest we should learn to love God so quickly, that we shall love Him beyond due measure? "Blessing the Lord (says *Eccli. xliii.* 32), exalt Him as much as you can: for He is above all praise." And St. Paul says, "So run that you may obtain" (1 *Cor. ix.* 24). Again, "Let us hasten, therefore, to enter into that rest" (*Heb. iv.* 11). For, with what energy soever a man may

enter on the road of perfection, he will still have much progress to make, before he arrives at final perfection in his Heavenly home. The argument is equally absurd, if we consider the means used for attaining to perfection. Who would tell a man who aspired to virginity or continence, that it would be best for him first to live chastely in wedlock? Or who would bid a man who wished to practise poverty, first to live justly in the enjoyment of riches, as if wealth were a preparation for poverty, rather than an impediment to it? The young man who did not accept from Our Lord the Counsel of poverty, (*Matt. xix.*) went away sad, because of his possessions.

We have, hitherto, been observing the connection between the Counsels and the precepts of charity, but our arguments hold equally good, with regard to the other precepts of the Law. For, if the practice of the Counsels, and the exercises of the Religious life, are a safeguard against breaking the Commandments, is it not clear that some men may need them, in order, by their means, to avoid the occasions of sin? Should we advise a young man to live among women, and bad companions, in order that, by practising chastity in the world, he might afterwards observe it in the cloister? Is this virtue easier in the world, than in the religious life? The same reasoning applies to other virtues and vices.

Those who hold the opposite opinion, resemble generals, who would fain expose their raw recruits to the heat of battle. Those who live in the world, and keep the Commandments, can make greater progress in virtue if they become religious. For, we must remember, that if, on the one hand, a secular

life spent in obedience to the Commandments is a good preparation for the practice of the Counsels, yet, on the other hand, a life in the world presents a great obstacle to the observance of the Counsels. Hence, St. Gregory says in the beginning of his *Morals:* "When my conscience was urging me to leave the world, many secular cares began to press upon me, as if I were to be detained in the world, not from love of its beauty, but by that which was more serious, viz. anxiety of mind. But at length, escaping eagerly from all such cares, I sought the monastery gate."

CHAPTER VII

WHEREIN THE ARGUMENTS OF OUR OPPONENTS ARE CONCLUSIVELY REFUTED

THE arguments adduced in the foregoing chapters facilitate the complete refutation of our adversaries' opinion. Their first contention, namely that Our Lord gave the Counsel of poverty to one who had already practised the keeping of the Commandments, is pulverised by St. Jerome. This father, commenting on the words in St. Matt. xix., "all these things have I kept from my youth," speaks thus: "This young man spoke untruly. For, if he had, by his deeds, fulfilled the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' why should he have gone away sad, when Christ said to him: 'Go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor'?" Origen, also, writing on the Gospel of St. Matt., says, "It is related, in the Hebrew version of the Gospel, that when the Lord said to him (the rich young man), 'Go, sell what thou hast' the youth began to hesitate. Then Jesus said to him, 'How, then, sayest thou, that thou hast observed the Law and the prophets? It is written in the Law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"; and behold many of thy brethren, the sons of Abraham, are clothed in dung and perish with hunger. Thy house is filled with plenty, but none of it goes forth to thy brethren.' Then, rebuking him, the Lord said: 'If thou wilt be

perfect,' etc. For, it is impossible to fulfil the commandment to love our neighbour as ourselves, if we are rich, and abounding in possessions." This remark refers, of course, to the perfect observance of the precept of charity; and there is no reason why the rich young man may not have kept the Commandments imperfectly, and thus not have spoken untruly in his answer to the Lord. This is the opinion of St. Chrysostom and of other writers. But the fact that Christ gave the Counsel of poverty to one who was, even to a certain extent, practised in obedience to the Commandments, is no proof that such obedience is a necessary preliminary, or the sole preparation for the exercise of the Counsels. St. Matthew was called from habits of sin to the practice of the Counsels; thereby showing us, that the way of perfection is open both to sinners and to innocent souls.

In the second place, our opponents say that a catechumen must be taught to keep the Commandments after he has received the Sacraments of the Church. This argument is irrelevant to the point in question; for, instruction in the Commandments, as well as the doctrine and Sacraments of the Faith, is necessary to all men, whether they remain in the world, or embrace the perfect life of religious; for these things are common to both classes.

Their third argument, viz. that by keeping the Commandments, man attains to the fulness of wisdom, means nothing more than that, obedience to the Commandments is rewarded by the knowledge of the hidden things of God. Our opponents further quote the words given in one version of *Eccli. i.* 33: "Desire wisdom, keep the Commandments, and the Lord will

give her to thee."[1] This text, however, as is evident, has no bearing on the question.

Their fourth argument, founded on the Gloss on the verse in Psalm cxxx., "As a weaned child," etc., to which reference has already been made, we will carefully discuss. For, although in itself frivolous, it is considered by our adversaries to be very weighty. If we examine this passage in the Gloss, we shall see that it refers to the spiritual nourishment of recent converts to the Faith. It sets forth that, "after Baptism, we are instructed in good works and nourished by the milk of simple teaching, until, being somewhat grown, we are admitted to our Father's table." This means to say that we progress from the more simple doctrine "The Word was made Flesh," to the Word of the Father "in the beginning with God." Now, these words of the Gloss, evidently refer to the order to be observed in instruction.

Our opponents next adduce, as an argument, that the Church observes five seasons in the spiritual generation of her converts. They are, first, initiated, by exorcism and catechism, into the rudiments of the Faith. Then, they are nourished in the womb of the Church, until Holy Saturday, when, by Baptism, they are born into light. After Baptism until Whitsuntide, they are carried in the arms of the Church, and nourished with her milk; for, during that season, neither fasting, nor rising at night, nor any other penitential practice is observed. After Whitsuntide, when they have been confirmed by the Holy Ghost, catechumens are, so to speak, weaned, and begin to

[1] This verse, as given in the English version of the Vulgate, runs: "Son, if thou desire wisdom, keep justice and God will give her to thee."—EDITOR.

fast, and perform other laborious exercises. Now, this example of the five seasons appears to support our adversaries' argument, but it is fallacious in three respects.

There is a difference between the case of recent converts to the Faith, who, like babes, require to be nourished, and that of penitent sinners who, like sick men, need to be healed. Those newly converted to the Faith need not, necessarily, in the beginning, have difficult tasks laid upon them; they may be first exercised in easier things, and then, be led on to those that are more laborious. Such men resemble children, who are fed, first on milk, and afterwards on stronger meats; and it is to them that the Gloss refers. But, if recent converts should, of their own accord, stretch forth their hands to higher things, who shall dare to withhold them? In the simile used by the Gloss, we see that, just as, after the solemn Baptism on Easter Eve, the Church, for the sake of the sick, grants a certain rest from laborious works, so, likewise, after the solemn Baptism which precedes Pentecost, she immediately enjoins fasting; thus signifying, that some who have in fervour of spirit been received to Baptism, subject themselves at once to a stricter life. But with penitent sinners the case is otherwise. Severe penance is imposed on them at first. This, by degrees, is mitigated; for, they are like sick persons, who, in the beginning of their illness, are restricted to a strict diet, which, when convalescence has set in, is somewhat relaxed. Thus, the Church imposes on innocent souls, from the very beginning, the burden of the Commandments, which must, of necessity, be kept. She does not lay the Counsels upon them, as a necessity; but she does not forbid them to under-

take their observance, if they have the will so to do. Stricter obligations are, however, imposed upon penitents, according to the statutes of the Canons of the Early Church.

The second fallacy into which our opponents fall, in the application of their argument, is that of saying, that, in every office or profession, transition is made from what is easier to what is more difficult. Now, it is not necessary that everyone who undertakes an important post, should first have served in an inferior capacity. Neither is it essential, that a man, desiring to practise a trade, should already have worked at another trade; but he must ascend from the less to the more difficult branches of the trade, in which he wishes to become proficient. In like manner, it is not essential, that they who wish to become religious, should already have kept the Commandments in the world. What is necessary is, that, when they enter religious life, the easier observances should be imposed upon them at first. Again, those who wish to become clerics need not first have led the life of laymen, nor need they who wish to live continently, have observed continence in married life.

The third error into which our adversaries fall, arises from the fact, that there is a twofold difficulty in the work of practising the Counsels. The first difficulty arises from the greatness of the work itself, which, because it needs the perfection of virtue, is not imposed upon the imperfect. The second difficulty lies in the restraints imposed. And the more imperfect the persons, the more restraint they need. Thus, children need closer watching while they are under the custody of their tutors, than when they have arrived at perfection. Now, the religious life, as we

have seen, is a certain course of discipline restraining men from sin, and leading them on to perfection. Therefore, they who are the most imperfect, not being practised in the observance of the Commandments, stand in the greatest need of the safeguards of religious life, which render it more easy for them to abstain from sin, than if they lived freely in the world. The words in the Gloss, "But many, such as heretics and schismatics, pervert this order," are clearly shown, by the context, to refer to order of doctrine. For the Gloss continues: "This man says indeed that he has kept the Commandments, thus laying himself under a curse as if he were humble, not merely in other matters, but also in knowledge. For, he says, I thought humbly, being at first nourished by milk, which is 'the Word was made flesh,' in order that I might grow to the Bread of Angels, to wit 'the Word' which 'in the beginning was with God.'" And, thus, he returns to what he said at first. By this passage we see, that words, intended as a means, have been used as an example.

The next argument brought forward against us is so frivolous, that it requires no answer. It concerns the five thousand men whom Christ fed with five loaves and the four thousand among whom seven loaves were distributed. It is not necessary that the order of things typified, should correspond with the order of their types; for we often see, that later things are prefigured by earlier ones, and *e converso*. Neither can any valid argument be drawn from symbolical things of this nature, as St. Augustine says in his *Epistle against the Donatists*. Dionysius, likewise, writes in his *Epistle to Titius* that allegorical theology is not argumentative. We will, notwithstanding, observe,

that, by this order of miracles is typified the order of precepts and counsels, in so far as regards the whole human race. The Counsels were given, not in the old Law but in the new; for, the Law brought nothing to perfection. The Gloss points this out, by saying that the five loaves signify the legal precepts, and that the seven loaves are symbolical of evangelical perfection. But this is no reason why the same men should be exercised, first in the precepts of the Law, and then in the Counsels in the religious life; for, we do not read that the same individuals were first among the seven thousand, and that they then formed part of the four thousand who were miraculously fed by Jesus Christ.

Again, the point, brought forward by our opponents, as to the four things of which the Gospel is composed, is not relevant to the question we are discussing. For, the perfection proposed as an example does not refer to the Counsels, but to virtuous acts, or the perfect way of keeping the Commandments, as Christ kept them. Hence the Gloss goes on to quote other examples, *e.g.*, "Learn of Me, for I am meek," etc., and elsewhere, "Be ye perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect." "I have given you an example," etc.

We must examine with greater care the seventh argument; as it is one that our opponents are fond of using. It concerns the order to be observed between the active and the contemplative life. It is perfectly true that the active ought to precede the contemplative life; but the meaning of the active life is not always understood. It is sometimes thought, that the active life consists, merely, in the management of temporal affairs; and therefore, as religious possess nothing, either individually or in common, they are

believed to be incapable of sharing in the active life. St. Gregory, in the second part of *the second homily on Ezechiel*, points out that this view is a mistaken one. "The active life," he says, "consists in giving bread to the hungry, instructing the ignorant, correcting them that err, recalling the proud to humility, caring for the sick, distributing to each one what is needful to him, and in seeing how each one may be maintained by those things that are entrusted to us." Thus we see, that the active life regards not merely temporal matters, but also the guidance and correction of others in spiritual concerns, and that for such duties those men are the best fitted who own no worldly possessions. Consequently, when Our Lord appointed the Apostles to be the teachers of the whole earth, He stripped them of their property (*Matt. x.*).

We may, further, enquire whether the exercise of the moral virtues pertains to the active life. Aristotle (*Ethic. X.*) answers this question in the affirmative, and adds, that the intellectual virtues belong to the contemplative life. St. Augustine confirms this opinion in XII. *De Trinit.*, where he ascribes the inferior reason, which is exercised about temporal matters concerning either ourselves or others, to action, and the superior reason, which is occupied with Eternal interests, to contemplation. In accordance with this view, it is quite reasonable to hold, that the active must precede the contemplative life. For, unless a man has, by the exercise of the moral virtues, freed his soul from passion, (which it is the business of the active life to do), he will not be fitted for the contemplation of divine truth. "Blessed are the clean of heart," says Christ, "for they shall see God" (*Matt. v.* 8.), they shall see Him here by imperfect contemplation, and

hereafter by that which is perfect. Thus the exercise of the active life pertains not only to laymen, but to religious also.

Three reasons go to prove that this is the case. First, because by the exercise of the moral virtues the passions are restrained. Secondly, because religious can show mercy to others by teaching and correcting, or by visiting the sick and comforting the sorrowful, be they seculars or religious of their own monastery. Thus, they can verify the words of St. James (*i.* 27), "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and the widow in their tribulation, and to keep one's self unspotted from this world." The third reason why religious share with seculars in the active life is, because, at their entry into religion, they distributed their worldly possessions to the poor. It is not, therefore, because the precepts belong only to the active life, that the Gloss says that the Commandments are the duty of the active, and the Counsels of the contemplative life. St. Gregory writes: "To live a contemplative life, is to bear in mind with all diligence, charity to God and to our neighbour, which are the great precepts of the Law. The Counsels dispose the soul more particularly to the contemplative life. For, without them, the mere observance of the Precepts will not suffice for contemplation, which requires greater perfection." No one need remain in the world for the sake of leading an active life; for, in religion, he can have quite as much exercise in the active life, as is necessary to dispose him for the contemplative.

The eighth argument, viz., *that no one arrives at once at the highest point*, is not much to the purpose, although great stress is laid upon it. For, we may

consider the highest and the lowest, either as referring to the same condition and to the same man, or to different conditions and different men. If we consider these degrees as referring to the same condition and the same man, it is quite evident, that no one arrives at once at the highest point; for every virtuous man is, during the whole course of his life, making progress towards perfection. But if these degrees are considered with regard to different conditions, there is no reason why a man should not fill the highest post without having served in an inferior capacity. It is not necessary for a cleric to have lived as a layman; for some men are admitted in their boyhood into the ranks of the clergy. Neither is the saying that *no one reaches the highest point at once*, true, if we consider it as referring to different people; for one man may start from a degree of holiness *far higher than* that to which another will attain throughout the whole course of his life. St. Gregory says (*Dialog.* II.): "In order that all his contemporaries and all succeeding generations might know to what a height of perfection the child Benedict had arrived, when he received the grace of conversion."

The ninth argument, viz. that *damp walls cannot bear a roof*, and the tenth, that *he courts a fall who tries to climb a steep ascent without steps*, are both irrelevant to our subject. The authorities from whom these passages are drawn, use these examples in speaking of the dignity of the episcopal state, which requires mature virtue, and is, therefore, not to be conferred on those that are imperfect. But the Counsels are aids to perfection, and safeguards from sin. Hence we may speak of them as serving to dry the moisture from

newly erected walls, and as sure steps whereby the summit of perfection may be reached.

The eleventh argument used against us deals with the natural priority of the Commandments to the Counsels. Reference to what we have already said will show, how much weight such an argument carries. If we speak of the final precepts, viz. the love of God and of our neighbour, it is clear that the Counsels are directed towards these precepts as to their end. The relation between the Counsels and these precepts, is that which exists between things ordained for a certain end, and the end for which they are ordained. Now, an end is the first thing, if we consider it with reference to the intention; but it is the last if we consider it with regard to the prosecution or consummation. If, then, the Counsels were so ordained with reference to the Commandments, that, unless the Counsels were practised the Commandments could not be observed, it would follow that man is bound to observe the Counsels before loving God or his neighbour. Such, of course, is not the case. But if the relations between the Counsels and the Precepts be in such wise, that, by means of the Counsels, the Precepts can be more easily and more perfectly kept, it follows that by means of the Counsels, we can attain to the perfect love of God and of our neighbour. Hence we see that, although in intention, this precept precedes the counsels, yet, in prosecution, the counsels precede this precept.

If we consider the relations between the Counsels and the other Precepts which are given as means to the love of God and our neighbour, we shall see that these relations are of a twofold nature. For, as the Counsels cannot be observed without the Precepts, and

as the Precepts are kept by many without the Counsels, the Counsels can be compared to the Precepts if they be considered generally. Thus the relations between the Counsels and the Precepts, would be that of particular to general. The particular will precede the general, not necessarily in order of time, but in order of nature. Therefore, it is not essential to be exercised in obedience to the Precepts, before passing to the observance of the Counsels. But another relation may be observed between the Counsels and the Precepts, which can be observed without the counsels. In this relation the counsels may be compared to the precepts as a perfect to an imperfect species, *e.g*, as a rational to an irrational animal. In this relation, the Counsels precede the precepts, in the order of nature, for, in every genus, the perfect is naturally first. As Boetius says, " nature begins from the perfect." It matters not, that, in this relation, the precepts precede the counsels in point of time, for a thing of an imperfect species may, in point of time, be prior to the thing of a perfect species to which it passes. What is essential is, that an imperfect thing should pass to a perfect one of its own species.

The last argument, viz., that there can be no salvation without the Counsels if the Counsels precede the Precepts, is manifestly based on a misunderstanding of what we have been saying. For we do not affirm that the Counsels are so related to the Precepts, that the latter cannot be kept without the former. What we assert is, that by means of the Counsels, the Precepts can be more perfectly obeyed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ARGUMENTS WHICH ARE USED TO PROVE, THAT BEFORE ENTERING RELIGIOUS LIFE, A MAN OUGHT TO DELIBERATE FOR A LONG TIME, AND TAKE COUNSEL OF MANY

We will proceed to consider whether it be necessary for one who desires to become a religious, to take the advice of many counsellors. It is urged that advice should be sought from many persons before taking a difficult step affecting one's whole life; and, as nothing can be conceived more difficult than to renounce oneself, leave the world, and spend one's whole life in religion, it must be necessary to take much advice and to spend a long time in reflection. This argument is based on the definition of a vow. A vow is said to be *the promise of a better good, made with grave deliberation.* The stringency of the vow depends upon the deliberation. No vow is so binding as the religious vows, which nothing can annul. Therefore, the religious vows require the gravest deliberation.

Those who hold this opinion seek to confirm it by these words, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits if they be of God" (1 John iv. 1). This text applies to entrance into religion. St. Benedict, in his *Rule*, and Pope Innocent, in his *Decretal*, quote it in this sense. But the "trying," of which St. John speaks, requires careful examination, and this examina-

tion (they conclude) is best made in consultation with many. Therefore, he that desires to enter religion should take counsel of many.

Those who think thus, further add, that counsel is most needed before taking a step, wherein there is the greatest danger of being deceived. There is great danger of deception on entering religious life, since "Satan transforms himself into an angel of light" (2 *Cor. ix.* 14), and, under an appearance of good, misleads the unwary. Therefore, it is only after grave deliberation, that a man should enter on the religious life. Again, it is alleged, that peculiarly diligent examination is required before undertaking anything that may come to a bad end. Now, as we see in the case of apostates and despairing souls, entrance into religious life has often ended badly. Consequently, this step requires grave consideration. A last argument remains, and it is considered a very weighty one. In the *Acts of the Apostles* (*v.* 39) the following words occur: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought." Now the counsel of entering religion has often come to nought by apostasy. Therefore, it was not from God. Hence, much deliberation with many people, is necessary, before taking such a step.

These are the chief arguments, adduced by those who impress upon candidates for religious life, the necessity for grave deliberation with many counsellors, in the hope that some obstacle may be placed in their way by one or other of their numerous advisers.

CHAPTER IX

ANSWERS TO THE FOREGOING ARGUMENTS

In order to demonstrate the fallacy of the foregoing arguments, we will first consider the case of St. Peter and St. Andrew, who, as soon as Our Lord called them, "leaving their nets followed him" (*Matt. iv.*). St. Chrysostom pronounces the following eulogium of them: "They were in the midst of their business; but, at His bidding, they made no delay, they did not return home saying: 'let us consult our friends,' but, leaving all things, they followed Him, as Eliseus followed Elias. The like unhesitating and instant obedience does Christ require of us." Then, we have the example of St. James and St. John, who, being called by God, immediately leaving their nets and their father, followed Him. St. Hilary, in his Commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel, says: "we are taught by their example in abandoning their trade and their father's house, to follow Jesus, and to be withheld, neither by worldly anxieties, nor by the ties of domestic life."

Again, we read of St. Matthew, (*Matt. ix.*), that, at the call of the Lord he "arose and followed Him." St. Chrysostom thus comments on this passage: "Behold the obedience of this man thus called! He neither refuses to obey, nor begs that he may go home to acquaint his kinsfolk of his departure." And

Remigius also observes of St. Matthew, that he made no account of the dangers which he might incur from the anger of the magistrates, when he left their business unfinished. Thus, it becomes plain, that nothing human ought to deter us from the service of God. We read in the Gospel of St. Matthew (ch. viii. 21), and again in that of St. Luke (ch. ix. 59), that "one of His disciples said to Him: 'Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him: 'follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.'" St. Chrysostom, writing on these words, says: "Christ spoke thus, not as contemning the love which we owe to our parents; but to show us that nothing ought to seem more necessary to us than the affairs of the Kingdom of Heaven. He would teach us, that, with our whole heart, we ought to attach ourselves to them, suffering nothing, howsoever important or attractive, to be an obstacle in our way. What would seem more necessary, than to bury one's father? What more easy? It would not have taken much time. But the devil is always on the alert to find some unguarded door, and, if he perceive a slight negligence, he will cause it to become great cowardice. Therefore, the wise man says: Defer not, from day to day. By these words he warns us not to waste a moment of time, and, although numberless affairs may be pressing upon us, to prefer spiritual interests to all other things, even to such as are necessary." St. Augustine says in his book *De Verbis Domini*, "Thy father is to be honoured; yea, but God must be obeyed. Christ says, 'I call thee to preach the Gospel. Thou art necessary to me for this task. My work is greater than is that which thou desirest to perform. There are others who can bury the dead. The first thing must not give place to

the last. Love your parents, but prefer God to them.'" If, then, Our Lord refused to grant His disciple a short time, in which to perform so necessary a duty, how great is the presumption of such as teach, that lengthy deliberation is necessary before embracing the Counsels?

St. Luke (ix. 61) tells us that, "another said: I will follow thee, Lord; but let me first take my leave of them that are at my house." St. Cyril, the great Greek doctor, comments thus on these words: "This man's promise is admirable and worthy of imitation. But by his desire of going to take leave of them that were in his house, he showed that he was somewhat wavering in his attachment to the Lord, although in his mind he had determined to follow him. The fact of his wishing to take counsel of his kinsfolk, who would not approve of his intention, shows that he was somewhat unstable; and, therefore, Christ rebuked him saying: 'No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.' He had put his hand to the plough by his eagerness to follow Our Lord, but he looked back, seeking an occasion of delay, by visiting his home, and conversing with his kinsmen. Not thus did the holy Apostles act, who, at once, left their boats, and their father, and followed Christ. Neither did St. Paul condescend to flesh and blood. Such ought to be the conduct of those who desire to follow Our Lord."

St. Augustine, in his book *De verbis Domini*, has this passage: "The Orient calls thee; wilt thou wait for the West?" Now by the ORIENT is meant Christ, as we know from the words in *Zach. vi.* 12: "Behold a man, the Orient is his name." By THE WEST is signified man, declining to the grave, and liable to fall into the darkness of sin and ignorance. He, therefore, does an

injury to Christ, "in whom are contained all the treasures of the wisdom of God" (*Colos. ii.* 3), who having heard His call, thinks it necessary to take counsel with mortal man. Our opponents try to evade this argument by an equivocation. They say that the passages, quoted by us, only refer to the audible call of the Lord, and, of course, in that case, no delay must be made, nor human counsel asked. But, if a man be interiorly called to enter religion, he needs long deliberation, and many advisers, in order to find out whether his vocation be from God. This is begging the question; for we are to take the words of Christ, written in Scripture, as coming from His own mouth. For He Himself says: "What I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch" (*Mark xiii.* 37). And in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans xv. 4, we find, "for what things soever were written, were written for our learning." As St. Chrysostom says: "If these things had only been said for them, they would not have been written: but they were *said* for them, and *written* for us." And St. Paul brings forward the authority of the Old Testament in his Epistle to the Hebrews (*xii.* 5), "And you have forgotten the consolation, which speaketh to you as unto children: my son, neglect not the discipline of the Lord." From which it is clear, that the words of Holy Scripture were spoken, not only to them that heard them, but to future generations.

We will especially examine whether the counsel given by Christ to the young man (Matt. xix. 21): "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor," was addressed to that youth only, or to all men. We can best consider this passage by referring to its context, wherein Peter says: "Be-

hold we have left all things and have followed Thee," and Our Lord promises the reward to all men saying: "Every one that hath left house or brethren, etc., for my name's sake . . . shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting." Thus, we see that this counsel is no less to be followed by all men, than if it had been given to each individually. Hence, St. Jerome, writing to the presbyter Paulinus, says: "Thou hast heard our Saviour's words: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow me.' Put these words then into practice. Strip thyself of all, and thus, following the Cross of poverty, wilt thou, the more speedily and more easily, ascend Jacob's ladder." And although our Lord addressed the counsel of poverty individually to the rich young man, He has, nevertheless, given the same advice to all mankind (*Matt. xvi.* 24), "If any man will come after Me," He says, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." St. Chrysostom, commenting on this text, says, "He addresses this teaching to the whole world, saying, 'If anyone will, be it man or woman, king, freedman, or serf.'" Now self-denial, according to St. Basil, means complete forgetfulness of past things, and the abnegation of our own will. In it, therefore, is included the disposal of the property which we possess of our own will. Therefore, the counsel given to the young man, is to be understood as given to all.

But another point remains to be considered. We have already said, that the words of Our Lord, quoted in Holy Scripture, carry the same weight, as if spoken by His own lips. But, there is another way whereby God speaks interiorly to men, viz. the way alluded to in Ps. lxxxiv. 9, "I will hear what the Lord God will

speak in me." Now this interior voice is to be preferred to any external speech. St. Gregory says (in *Homil. Pentecostes*), "The Creator does not speak to the understanding of a man, unless He speak to that same man by the unction of the Holy Ghost. Before Cain slew his brother he heard a voice saying, 'Thou hast sinned: cease.' But as, on account of his sin, he was admonished by a voice alone, and not by the unction of the Spirit, he was, indeed, able to hear the word of God, but refused to obey it." If, then, we are bound to obey immediately the audible voice of our Creator, how much more ought we not, unhesitatingly and unresistingly, to obey the interior whisper, whereby the Holy Spirit changes the heart of man. Hence, in *Isa. l.* 5, it is said by the mouth of the Prophet, or rather, of Christ Himself: "The Lord God hath opened my ear, (*i.e.* by interior inspiration), and I do not resist: I have not gone back." "Forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before," as we read in the Epistle to the *Philippians* (*iii.* 13). St. Paul, again, says (*Rom. viii.* 14), "Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." The Gloss of St. Augustine has the following comment on this passage: "Such men do not perform nothing, but they act under the impulse of grace." But he who resists, or hesitates, does not act by the impulse of the Holy Spirit.

It is, then, the distinguishing mark of the Sons of God, to be carried forward by grace to better things, without waiting for counsel. This impulse of grace is alluded to in the Prophet Isaias (*lix.* 59), "When he shall come as a violent stream, which the spirit of the Lord driveth on." St. Paul teaches us that this impulse of grace is to be obeyed. "Walk in the Spirit,"

he says, (*Galat. v.* 16), and again (*ibid.* 25), "If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law." St. Stephen thus reproached certain men, "You always resist the Holy Ghost" (*Acts vii.* 51). St. Paul says (1 *Thess. v.* 19), "Extinguish not the Spirit." On which words, the Gloss thus comments: "If the Holy Ghost should at any time reveal something to a certain man, do not forbid him to make known that which he has heard." Now, the Holy Ghost gives His revelations, not only by teaching man what he ought to speak, but by suggesting to him what he ought to do" (*John xiv.*). When, therefore, a man is inspired by this Holy Spirit to enter religious life, it is his duty to follow the inspiration at once, without waiting to take counsel of human advisers. This is shown us by the words of the Prophet Ezechiel (*i.* 20), "Whithersoever the spirit went, thither, as the spirit went, the wheels also were lifted up withal, and followed it."

We have further authority for our teaching, not merely in passages of Scripture, but in the examples of the Saints. St. Augustine, in the Eighth Book of his Confessions, tells us of two soldiers, one of whom, having read the life of St. Anthony, was so filled with Divine love, that he said to his comrade: "I have determined to serve God, I begin at this hour and in this spot. If it be irksome to thee to imitate me, at least withstand me not." But his comrade answered that he would stand by him in a combat which would bring so great reward. "Thus (O Lord) did both these thy servants build up a tower at a befitting cost, viz. by leaving all things and following thee." In the same book, St. Augustine thus reproaches himself with having delayed his conversion: "When I was convinced of the truth, I knew not how to make reply

save in slow and drowsy words: 'I am coming now: let me be, awhile longer.' But my promised time had no limit, and my 'little while' was long protracted." And, again, in the same book, he says, "I was filled with shame, for that I listened to the babble of worldly and carnal concerns, and hung wavering." Thus, we see, that, far from being praiseworthy, it is most reprehensible, to hesitate or take counsel, as if we were in doubt, when we have heard an interior or exterior call, be it some word, or some passage in Scripture.

Interior inspiration has efficacy to enable those to whom it is vouchsafed to accomplish great deeds. We read in the Acts of the Apostles, that when the disciples were gathered together the Holy Ghost, coming upon them, made them to speak of the wonders of God. The Gloss, says, on this passage, "The grace of the Holy Spirit of God knows no obstacles." Again, the Book of Ecclesiasticus (*xi.* 23) has these words: "It is easy in the eyes of God on a sudden to make the poor man rich." St. Augustine speaks of the efficacy of internal inspiration in his book *De praedestinatione Sanctorum.* He quotes the words recorded in St. John (vi.), "Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to Me." On these words, he says: "This school wherein the Father is heard and teacheth, in order that men may come to the Son, is far removed from the senses; for in it we hear, not with ears of flesh, but with the hearing of the heart." Again, he says: "The grace which, by the Divine munificence, is secretly bestowed, is not rejected by any hard heart; for it is given in order that hardness may be entirely taken away." St. Gregory, in his *homilia Pentecostes*, thus treats of the efficacy of interior inspiration: "Oh, how cunning a workman

is this Spirit. He makes no delay in teaching what He will. As soon as He touches the heart, He teaches it. His touch is teaching. He changes the human mind as soon as He enlightens it; and the man, taught by Him, at once forsakes what he was, in order to show what he was not." He who hesitates to obey the impulse of the Holy Spirit for the sake of taking counsel, either knows not this impulse, or else resists it.

Philosophers, no less than sacred writers, condemn the error of acting thus. Aristotle, in the chapters of the *Ethics* called *De bona fortuna*, says, "If we seek to know what is that principle of movement in the soul, corresponding to God in the universe, we shall see that reason cannot be the principle of reason; that principle must be something better. But what, save God, can be better than knowledge and understanding?" He continues, in another place: "They that are moved by God, need not to be counselled; for they have a principle surpassing counsel and understanding." Shame then on him who, calling himself a Catholic, would send men inspired by God, to take advice of human counsellors, of whom even a heathen philosopher tells us they have no need.

But, let us further examine for what cause, those called by God to religious life, can require counsel. First, it is sacrilegious to doubt whether the life, counselled by Christ, is the most perfect. Again, none but a soul enslaved by human love would hesitate, as to whether it be right to abandon the intention of entering religious life for fear of grieving friends, or incurring temporal loss. St. Jerome thus writes, in his epistle to Heliodorus: "Even should thine infant son hang round thy neck, or thy mother, with

unkempt hair and dishevelled raiment, show thee the breasts that suckled thee, or thy father cast himself along thy threshold, pass on. Shed no tear; tread thy father under foot, and hasten to the standard of the Cross. In this case, cruelty is the only piety." Elsewhere he adds, "Mine enemy, with drawn sword, is about to slay me, and shall I think of my mother's tears? Shall I forsake the combat for love of my father, when I ought not to leave Christ even to bury my parents?" In several places he writes in the same strain.

But, perhaps, some may think it necessary to take counsel, lest they should not be able to fulfil what is implied in entering religious life. The same doubt occurred to St. Augustine, as he tells us in the Eighth Book of his Confessions. He feared to undertake to observe the counsel of continence; and, speaking of himself, he uses these words: "On the side to which I turned my face, and whither I feared to go, I beheld the chaste dignity of continence. She was serene and cheerful, without wantonness. She beckoned me to approach her fearlessly, holding out, to embrace me and uphold me, her gentle hands full of numberless good examples. With her were many youths and maidens, staid widows, and venerable virgins." He adds later on: "And she smiled at me, mocking, as if to say: 'what these have done, canst thou not likewise do? Have these acted by their own might, and not by the power of their God? The Lord their God has given me to them. Wherefore, then, dost thou stand in thyself, and hast no foothold? Cast thyself on Him. Fear not. He will not draw away to let thee fall. Cast thyself on Him with confidence. He will receive thee, and will heal thee."

There are, nevertheless, two points on which those may take counsel who have the intention of entering religious life. Of these, one is the mode of becoming a religious; and the other is, the existence of any obstacle to religious life, such as matrimony or the state of slavery. But advice should not be sought from kinsfolk. The book of Proverbs (xxv. 9) says, indeed, "Treat thy cause with thy friend, and discover not the secret to a stranger." But, in the matter of entering religion, relations are not friends, but rather enemies. "A man's enemies are they of his own household," says Micheas (vii. 6), and Our Lord quotes his words (*Matt. x.* 36). Therefore, with regard to this matter, the advice of our kinsmen, is to be particularly avoided.

St. Jerome, in his epistle to Heliodorus, thus enumerates the obstacles which family ties may raise to entrance into religious life. "Thy widowed sister will encircle thee with her arms. The domestic slaves, amongst whom thou hast grown up, will cry to thee, 'To whose service dost thou leave us?' The aged nurse and the foster-father, who, in fondness, has been unto thee a second father, after thine own, will call out: 'Tarry a little: we shall soon be dead; wait and bury us.'" St. Gregory, likewise, says (*Moral.* III.): "Our crafty enemy, seeing himself banished from the hearts of good men, seeks out those by whom they are loved. He speaks by means of their caressing words, knowing that they are more loved than others. He hopes that, as the violence of love overcomes their heart, he may easily destroy the fortifications of their virtue, by means of the sword of persuasion." For this reason it was, that the Blessed Benedict, as St. Gregory tells us (*Dialog.* II.), secretly fled from his

nurse, and sought retirement in a desert place, but opened his mind to the monk Romanus, who kept his secret, and gave him assistance. Carnal men, to whom the wisdom of God is folly, are, therefore, not to be consulted. The following advice is given us in the Book of Ecclesiasticus (xxxvii. 12), "Treat not with a man without religion concerning holiness, nor with an unjust man concerning justice." The same inspired writer adds: "Give no heed to these in any matter of counsel. But be continually with a holy man," from whom counsel may be sought if in aught it should be needed.

CHAPTER X

ANSWER TO THE OBJECTIONS RAISED AGAINST THE FOREGOING ARGUMENTS

It is easy to answer the objections which may be raised against our arguments. It is true, in the first place, that advice should be sought in difficult and serious undertakings, when the way is not clear. When, however, the right path has been shown us by some higher counsellor, it is unwise to open the question again, and to seek further advice.

The second argument adduced, viz. that a vow is confirmed by the deliberation of the mind, is irrelevant to the matter in hand. For, the deliberation spoken of, consists in that choice, whereby a man elects the greater good, to which he intends to devote himself. Now, all that is done from choice, is done by deliberation, or counsel; for choice is the desire for a thing commended to us, as Aristotle says (III. *Ethic.*). The same Holy Ghost, who is the spirit of strength and piety, and who moves men to a determination of embracing the religious life, is, likewise, the spirit of counsel and of knowledge, and directs their interior deliberation.

The third objection brought against us, is equally irrelevant. "Try the spirits whether they be of God," (1 *John iv.* 1) we are told. But probation is only necessary, where certainty does not exist. The Gloss

thus comments on the words of St. John, which we have quoted: "Things that are certain need no discussion." Nevertheless, those whose duty it is to admit others into religious life, may be uncertain of the motive which may lead a candidate to present himself. For he may be inspired by desire for spiritual perfection; or he may be influenced by curiosity; or by a wish to do some harm. Again, uncertainty may exist as to the fitness of postulants for religious life. Therefore, the Church ordains, and religious rules require, that candidates should pass through a period of probation. But the postulants themselves cannot be in doubt as to the motive which leads them to seek the religious habit. Therefore, they do not need deliberation, especially if they are not doubtful about their health, which the year of probation is intended to put to a test.

The statement that *Satan transforms himself into an angel of light*, and inspires good desires with the intention of deceiving us, is very true. But, as the Gloss says, when the devil deceives the bodily senses, he does not withdraw the mind from a praiseworthy and holy intention; for, whoever leads a faithful life, is in no danger. Even should Satan, pretending to be good, do or say things befitting the holy angels, and should he delude a man into believing him, the error would not be dangerous or harmful. But, when, by means of his pretence of good, he begins to draw men away to his own work, they need the greatest watchfulness, lest they should be led astray by him. Granted, then, that the devil instigates someone to enter religious life, this undertaking is a good one, worthy of the holy angels, and a man who consents

to it will run no risk. But he must be on his guard to resist temptations to pride or other vices. God often makes use of the malice of the devil for the profit of the just, for whom, if they overcome, He prepares crowns; and, thus, the evil spirits are duped by the saints. But, it must be understood, that a suggestion to enter religious life, proceeding either from man or from Satan, has no efficacy, unless it be accompanied by the interior attraction of God. St. Augustine in his book *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* says, "that all the saints are taught by God, not because all come to Christ, but because no one comes to him by any other means. Thus the desire to enter religion, from whomsoever such suggestion may proceed, comes from God."

The fifth argument, namely, that advice is needed before going into religion, because the undertaking may end badly, needs some discrimination. The bad end of any undertaking may be the fault either of the enterprise itself, or of him that makes the attempt. If the undertaking itself be dangerous, and frequently productive of ill effects, great deliberation would be needed before attempting it; or, it might be better to abandon it entirely. But if danger from the enterprise accrue but to very few, much deliberation would not be required about the step itself. Great care and vigilance, however, would be necessary on the part of him who undertakes it, lest he should, by any chance, fall into danger. Otherwise, he would make his enterprise a pretext for neglecting all human efforts. This is enforced by the words of Ecclesiasticus (*xi.* 4). "He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that considereth the clouds shall never reap,"

and those other words of the book of Proverbs (*xxvi.* 13) "The slothful man saith: 'There is a lion in the way and a lioness in the roads.'" On this text the Gloss observes: "There are many, who, when they hear words of exhortation, say that they would fain enter on the way of justice, but are by Satan held back from making progress."

It sometimes happens, however, that an undertaking, certainly good in itself, may come to an unfortunate termination. This failure is due to instability of purpose, on the part of the person engaged in the affair. But the fact that some men who have become religious, have changed for the worse and have apostatised, is no reason for delaying to enter religious life, on the plea of requiring longer deliberation. The same pretext might be used as an excuse for not embracing the Faith, or approaching the Sacraments, for as we are told by St. Peter (*2nd Ep. ii.* 21), "It had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than after they had known it, to turn back." St. Paul also says (*Heb. x.* 29), "He deserveth worse punishments, who hath esteemed the blood of the Testament unclean, and hath offered an affront to the spirit of grace." Neither would he return to works of justice, since we find it written (*Eccles. xxvi.* 27), "He that passeth over from justice to sin, God hath prepared such an one for the sword."

The sixth argument used against our proposition, is one that must be carefully examined, both on account of the frequency with which it is adduced, and on account of the heresy which lurks under its cover. We are told that *a work that is of God cannot come to nought.* Two

heresies have sprung up in our time, through misunderstanding of these words. The first error is, that since the body becomes corrupted, it cannot be the work of God. The second is, that any grace or charity received from God, cannot be lost. We might as well say, that, because Satan sinned, he was not created by God; or that, because Judas fell away from the Apostolic College, his calling was not from God; or that, because Simon Magus lapsed into heresy after Baptism, it was not the will of God that Philip should have baptised him.

We may add one other argument, as weighty as the preceding, which is commonly used by our adversaries. If a man, they say, goes into religion and leaves his monastery, his vocation was not from God, nor did the advice given him by his counsellors proceed from Heaven. In refutation of this opinion, we may quote the words wherewith St. Augustine (*Book* I. *contra Julianum*) replies to those who held that no root of evil can exist in that which is the gift of God. St. Augustine argues: "Manicheus will conquer, unless both he and thou be resisted. Therefore, the truth of the Catholic Faith overcomes Manicheus, because it overcomes thee." In order, then, that our opponents may be worsted, together with the Manicheans, let us say that the counsel of God is never brought to nought. To quote the words of Isaias (*xlvi.* 10): "My counsel shall stand, and all my will shall be done." Now, in God's unchangeable counsel, He sometimes, as St. Augustine says, in his book *De Perseverantia*, gives temporal justice to those to whom He does not give the gift of perseverance; just as He gives temporal existence to corruptible things, on which He does not

bestow eternal life. And thus the Manicheans are answered. For corruptible things are created by the immutable counsel of God, in order that they may enjoy temporal existence. Our opponents are, likewise, silenced, since, in the eternal wisdom of God, He gives the resolution of entering the religious life, to those on whom He does not bestow the grace of perseverance.

CHAPTER XI

ARGUMENTS USED BY THOSE WHO MAINTAIN THAT MEN SHOULD NOT BIND THEMSELVES BY VOW TO EMBRACE THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

We must next examine the views held by those who endeavour to prevent men from binding themselves by vow to become religious. Some there are who seek to detract from the merit of any vows, contending that it is better to perform good works without being bound by any obligation. They support their opinion by the following words of Prosper (*Bk.* II. *de vita contemplativa*): "We ought to fast and abstain, not as being bound thereto by necessity, lest, if we do these works unwillingly, we should be acting, not through devotion, but from constraint." Now, he that makes a vow to fast, subjects himself to the necessity of fasting; and this is the case with all other good works. Therefore, it would not seem expedient to make a vow to fast, or to enter religion, or to perform any other pious action. Those who hold this view maintain, likewise, that a good work loses in merit, in proportion to the necessity for its performance. Now, as a man who has vowed to enter religion, or to perform any other virtuous action, is bound to fulfil what he has promised to God, it is better and more praiseworthy, if he execute such a good work, without the obligation of a

vow, rather than in the accomplishment of one. Those who argue thus, endeavour, likewise, in an especial manner, to prove that people should not be persuaded to enter religion on account of the obligation laid upon them by any vow or oath.

They support their opinion by the statute of the Council of Toledo, wherein (*Dist.* XLV. *cap. De Judaeis*), we find these words: "Not unwilling, but willing souls, will be saved. For justice must be preserved intact. Man, of his own choice, obeyed the will of the serpent, and perished. Therefore, each man must be saved by the response of his own soul in believing, when the grace of God calls him to do so. Therefore men are to be converted, not by force, but by their own free will and choice." Now, these words apply far more forcibly to entrance into religious life, which is less necessary to salvation than is faith in the Christian religion. But those who enter religion on account of a vow or an oath, do so, not freely, but under constraint. Therefore, such obligation is not to be commended. The decree of Pope Urban, (XIX. *quaest.* II. *cap. Duae sunt*), is considered an argument in support of this opinion. The Pope says that they who enter religious life are led by a private law, which is the law of the Holy Ghost. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 *Cor. iii.* 17). Now, necessity, which constrains men by the obligation of a vow or oath, is opposed to liberty. Therefore, it is not seemly, that men should be obliged to embrace religious life, on account of any oath or vow.

Another argument is drawn from the fall of those, who, having entered religion under the constraint of some obligation, have not persevered therein, but have returned to the world, and abandoned themselves, in

despair, to vice of every kind. In them is fulfilled what Our Lord said to the Pharisees (*Matt. xxiii.* 15), "You go round about the sea and the land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him the child of hell twofold more than yourselves."

It is further maintained, that some men who were under vow to go into religion, have not fulfilled their obligation, and have, nevertheless, become good bishops or archdeacons. Had they kept their vow, these good results would not have been obtained. It is also urged, that men must not be persuaded to embrace the religious state for the sake of any temporal advantages, such as gifts. The decree of Pope Boniface (*I. quaest. II. cap. Quam pio*) is quoted in confirmation of this proposition, for the Pope says: "Nowhere do we read that the disciples of the Lord, or their followers, were converted to the worship of God by gifts."

It is further alleged that it leads men into unfaithfulness, to be bound, while still inexperienced, to the laborious obligations of religious life, such as the long morning office, trying vigils, fasts and disciplines. They are led like cattle to the slaughter-house; and, as they do not fulfil what they have vowed to perform, these religious exercises are for them snares which entangle them in eternal death. Such obligations, it is urged, are unlawful as being contrary to the statute of Innocent IV., which provides a year of probation for candidates to religious life, and forbids anyone to be bound before the age of Fourteen years.[1] This decree is in harmony with the rule of

[1] The Council of Trent (*Sess.* 25, *Cap.* 15.) forbids religious, of either sex, to take the prescribed vows until they have completed their sixteenth year, and have had at least a year's probation. Religious vows made before that age are null and void. Pope Pius IX.

St. Benedict, which, also, appoints a year of probation for those who enter the order. It is declared, furthermore, to be peculiarly unlawful for youths under the age of puberty, to be bound to go into religion, for how can a youth accept obligations which may lawfully be made void by another? If any youths of tender years have bound themselves to become religious, they may be withheld from so doing by their parents or guardians. This is laid down in XX. *quaest.* 2, where it is declared, that, "if a maiden, under the age of twelve years, have taken the veil, her engagements may be annulled at the will of her parents or guardians." Thus, it is unlawful to bind, either by oath or vow, children, under the age of puberty, to the religious life.

It is, further, laid down that none, under this age, can be bound to religious life, even though he or she should be capable of fraud. St. Bernard, in the preparation of regulars and of those who embrace the religious state, speaks thus on the decree of Pope Innocent III. which begins: *Postulasti:* "If thou desirest to know what to expect of them when they are under the age of thirteen or fourteen years, thou mayest be in doubt: for they may be capable of craft, and may make up in cunning what they lack in age." This has been proved in marriage, as we see *Extra de Despon. impub. cap.* A NOBIS, *et cap. Tuae*, and, as they have been able to bind themselves to the devil, they may also be able to bind themselves to God. But the Pope replies, that children under fourteen,

by an Encyclical Letter (*Ad Universalis, etc.*), dated Feb. 7, 1861, ordered that three years must elapse between the first, or *simple*, profession, to which we have just referred, and the final, or *solemn*, profession.—EDITOR.

may, after they have been received, serve in the Church, but they may not be bound under obligations. He that is capable of fraud, the Pope continues in his reply to Hugh, is bound to good, and if he has become a monk he is under the obligations of the monastic life, since he was able to bind himself to the devil. Innocent III. was of the same opinion, for, in this same decretal, he replies that entrance into religious life is a solemn engagement, *if age is supplied by malice.*[1] This is also laid down in the old decretal, but it is of small import in our days.

Those who argue against the propriety of persons being under an obligation to go into religion, quote the *Summae* of Raymund and Goffin. They also maintain (XXII. *Quaest.* V. *cap.* PUERI and *cap.* HONESTUM) that children under fourteen years of age ought not to be bound by oath; neither, by the same reasoning, can they be bound by vow to enter religious life. They say, further, that, as the word *religion* signifies either re-binding or re-electing[2] according to St. Augustine (*De Civit. Dei* X.), therefore children, who are not bound and have made no choice, cannot be re-bound, nor can they repeat their choice. From all these arguments they conclude, that children, who embrace, or are constrained to embrace religious life, are much to be pitied for their folly.

[1] The force of the argument seems to lie in this, that if a youth has sufficient control of his reason to be guilty of sin, and so to bind himself to the devil, he is equally capable of doing good by binding himself, in religion, to God.—EDITOR.

[2] *Religio* is said to be derived either from re-ligare, or from re-eligere. The former word means "to bind again," the latter "to choose again." The first binding or choice was made by the vows of baptism, the second is made by the religious profession.—EDITOR.

CHAPTER XII

REFUTATION OF THE ERROR CONTAINED IN THE LAST CHAPTER, TOGETHER WITH AN EXPOSITION OF THE TRUTH, THAT GOOD WORKS, DONE UNDER VOW, ARE MORE MERITORIOUS THAN THOSE PERFORMED WITHOUT ANY SUCH OBLIGATION

In order that the truth may be made manifest with regard to each of the premises contained in the last chapter, we will investigate them one by one, beginning with those that concern common things, and proceeding to such as are more spiritual. We will first examine whether it be true, that good works, done under vow, are less meritorious, than those performed without such obligation. And, although a great deal has been said on this subject in our little book on Perfection,[1] we will nevertheless not hesitate to go over the ground again.

We must, first, remember, that, although the praiseworthiness of an action depends on the root of the will, the work itself becomes more praiseworthy, in proportion to the excellence of the will. Now, one condition of a good will is, that it be firm and stable. The Book of Proverbs (xiii. 4) reproaches the slothful, in these words: "The sluggard willeth and willeth not." Therefore, an exterior work becomes praiseworthy and

[1] *i.e.* the *Opusculum* which forms the volume recently published under the title, *The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly Office.*—EDITOR.

meritorious, in proportion to the stability of the will in good. Hence, St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians (1st Ep. xv. 58), says: "Be ye steadfast and immoveable." And Aristotle teaches, that, for the perfection of virtue, stability and constancy in operation are necessary. Lawyers also define justice as firmness and steadfastness of will. On the other hand, we know that the heinousness of sin depends upon the obstinacy in evil shown by the sinner. Nay, this very obstinacy is itself called a sin against the Holy Ghost. Now it is clear, that the will to do anything, is strengthened by an oath. "I have sworn," says the Psalmist, "and am determined to keep the judgments of thy justice" (*Ps. cxviii.* 106). The will is, likewise, confirmed by a vow; since a vow is a promise, and he that promises to do a thing, strengthens his determination to do it. Therefore, as we see in our experience of human life, a virtuous action is more meritorious and more praiseworthy, if it be performed when the will is strengthened by a vow.

So inconstant is the human will, that it has become customary not to believe what men say they will do for one another, unless they confirm their words by promise, and further ratify those promises by lawful safeguards. Now we owe more to ourselves, especially in the affairs of our spiritual wellbeing, than we owe to other people. This we are taught by the words of Eccli. xxx. 24, "Have pity on thy own soul, pleasing God." Now, by reason of the inconstancy of his will, a man may neglect to perform something that he intended for the temporal advantage of his neighbour; he, therefore, provides against this possible omission, by confirming his promise by some oath or pledge. How much more fittingly, then, may he not

bind himself by oath or vow, to carry out some good resolution which he has made? Hence, St. Augustine says in his epistle to Paulina and Armentarius, "Having made a vow thou hast bound thyself, and canst not act otherwise." And he further adds: "Never regret thy vow; but rather rejoice that it is now no longer lawful for thee to do that, which, to thy detriment, thou hitherto hast been able to do."

It is further to be remembered, that a work of lesser intrinsic worth, is rendered more meritorious, if it be inspired by some motive of superior virtue. Thus, abstinence is more meritorious if it be practised from charity, and the merit is further increased if the motive be *latria*[1] which is of greater value than abstinence. Now a vow is an act of *latria*. It is a promise made to God, concerning those things which relate to His worship. Hence Isaias says (*xix.* 21), "The Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship Him with sacrifices and offerings: and they shall make vows to the Lord, and perform them." Thus we see, that fasting will be more meritorious and more praiseworthy, if it be performed under vow. A counsel, or command, concerning this matter, is given us in the words of Ps. lxxv. 12: "Vow ye, and pay to the Lord your God." This command, or exhortation, would be futile, were not a good work, done under vow, more meritorious than one done without such an obligation.

These facts being premised, we must now consider whether it be justifiable, or not, for a man to bind himself to enter the religious life. If it be true that it is a virtuous action to embrace the religious state, and that virtuous actions become more meritorious if they be done in fulfilment of a vow, those men must

[1] *i.e.* the worship of God.—EDITOR.

be acting in a praiseworthy manner who, being unable to become religious at once, bind themselves by vow to do so at a future time. This argument must be patent to all, save to those who, with Vigilantius, hold that the secular state is equal in merit to the religious life, or who have the still grosser folly to outdo the heresy of Vigilantius, by presuming to assert that the religious state, which enjoys the approbation of the Church, is not a state of salvation.

This audacious teaching does not only stultify the counsels of Christ, but is distinctly schismatical, as it contravenes the ordinances of the Church. But if, on the contrary, those who oblige themselves by vow to embrace the religious life, are inspired to do so by the Spirit of God, and act in a praiseworthy manner, they also are to be commended, who, working together with the Holy Ghost, endeavour by their exterior ministry to persuade their neighbours to do that to which the Spirit of God interiorly moves them. For, as St. Paul says (1*st Cor. iii.* 9), "We are God's coadjutors," to wit by our external ministry.

The foregoing remarks only apply to adults. We must now consider the question as to whether children, be they boys or girls, may lawfully bind themselves by vow to become religious. A distinction must be made between two kinds of vows, simple vows, and solemn vows. A simple vow consists in a mere promise. A solemn vow is a promise accompanied by some exterior manifestation, whereby a man actually offers himself to God. Thus, the reception of Holy Orders, the profession of a definite religious life made in the hands of a prelate, or the reception of the habit of professed religious, which is considered equivalent to religious profession, all solemnize a vow. Simple and

solemn vows have different effects upon matrimony. A solemn vow is an obstacle to marriage, and annuls a contract of marriage already made. A simple vow does not annul a marriage, but is an impediment in the way of any contract of marriage after the vow is made.

Simple and solemn vows have, likewise, different effects upon religious life. A solemn vow, made either by explicit or implicit profession, causes a man to become a monk or a brother in some religious order. A simple vow does not make a man a monk, for it leaves him with the ownership of his property, and does not annul his marriage, should he marry after taking such a vow. Now, as a simple vow consists solely in a promise made to God, proceeding from the interior deliberation of the mind, such a vow possesses an efficacy of which no human law can deprive it. There are, nevertheless, two conditions under which a simple vow may be invalidated. First, if such due deliberation as would ratify a promise, have been wanting: thus, a vow taken by a mad or delirious man would not be binding, as is laid down in *extra de regul. et transeuntibus ad relig.* SICUT TENOR. Neither would any obligation attach to the vow of a child, as yet incapable of fraud, or, who had not attained to the use of reason, which in children is developed at such different ages, that no certain rule can be laid down concerning it.

The other condition which would invalidate a simple vow is, in the event of a person vowing something to God, which he has not the power to give. Thus, if a slave make a vow to go into religion, he (supposing him to have attained the use of reason), would be certainly bound to keep his vow, if his master per-

mitted him to do so. But, if his master would not ratify the vow, the slave could, without sin, revoke it. This is laid down in the DECRETA (*distinct.* 44, SI SERVUS), where it is said, that "if a slave have, unknown to his master, been ordained, the master is entitled within a year of the ordination, to prove that the slave is his property, and to take him back." And since a boy or girl is, during childhood, in the power of the father, the father may, if he so will, acknowledge the vow made by a child as an effect of divine inspiration. We read in the Book of Numbers (*xxx.* 4), "If a woman vow anything, and bind herself by an oath, being in her father's house, and but yet a girl in age: if her father knew the vow that she hath promised, and the oath wherewith she hath bound her soul, and held his peace, she shall be bound by the vow: whatsoever she promised and swore, she shall fulfil in deed. But, if her father, as soon as he heard it, gainsaid it, both her vows and her oaths shall be void; neither shall she be bound to what she promised, because her father hath gainsaid it." From this passage it appears, that boys or girls, under the age of puberty, are bound, as far as in them lies, to keep vows that they have made, unless their reason be defective. Nevertheless, as they are under the authority of their father, he can annul their vows. This is also made clear by the context of the passage in Numbers, which we have quoted, which speaks of the right of a husband to annul a vow made by his wife.

We cannot positively determine the age at which individuals reach the use of reason; but the period at which the subjection of one person to another ceases, can be distinctly defined. This time is for a girl the age of twelve years: for a boy the age of fourteen.

This age is generally reckoned the time of puberty as we see in XX. *quaest.* 2, *Cap.* PUELLA, *cap.* SI IN QUALIBET. Thus, with regard to a simple vow to enter religion, a person may be bound, in so far as it depends upon himself, by such a vow even before he has arrived at the age of puberty, provided that he is capable of fraud, and has attained the use of reason, so that he understands what he is doing. But this vow may be revoked by a father, or a guardian who holds the place of a father. A solemn vow, on the other hand, made either explicitly or implicitly, requires certain exterior rites ordained by the Church. The Church exacts that, both for the reception of Holy Orders, and for the making of a solemn vow, the candidate must have attained the age of puberty, which for a boy is fourteen years and for a girl twelve.[1] Therefore a profession made by anyone under this age, even though the person be capable of fraud, does not render him a monk or brother of any religious order. This is the commonly accepted teaching of the Church, though Innocent III. is said to have spoken otherwise.

[1] See note, page 442.

CHAPTER XIII

REFUTATION OF THE ARGUMENTS ADDUCED IN THE LAST CHAPTER

Our last chapter consisted in an exposition of the arguments brought forward to prove that a vow did not add to the merit of a good work. Our present task is to answer these arguments. This we can easily do.

The words of Prosper, "we ought to fast, not out of necessity," refer to a forced fast, in contradistinction to a voluntary one. This is proved by the context, "lest we should, by not fasting voluntarily, show ourselves unwilling rather than devout." These words do not refer to the necessity imposed by a vow, for by a vow devotion is increased. This appears from the very etymology of the word.[1]

The second argument, viz. that which is done out of necessity is less meritorious than that which is done freely, must be understood of the necessity imposed on a man against his own will. But, when a man lays upon himself the necessity of doing good, his action is, thereby, rendered more praiseworthy, since he who performs it is "a servant of justice," which St. Paul exhorts us all to become (*Rom. vi.* 18). Hence, St.

[1] Devotio, or devotion, is derived from devovere, which means to devote or consecrate oneself. The word, consequently, implies voluntary service.—Editor.

Augustine in his epistle to Paulina and Armentarius exclaims, "Blessed necessity which constrains us to better things."

The third argument, which refers to the conversion of the Jews of their own free will, does not appear relevant to our subject. For the will may be confirmed in good, without any violation of its liberty; otherwise neither God, nor the blessed in Heaven would enjoy free will. But, coercion, proceeding either from violence, or fear, is repugnant to liberty. Therefore, the Canon DE JUDAEIS expressly condemns it, saying, "The holy Synod henceforth forbids violence to be used towards anyone to make them believe." But, neither a vow, nor an oath, do violence to a man; they merely serve to confirm his will in good. Therefore, neither a vow nor an oath, render a man unwilling, but rather cause him to will more strongly, and to begin, in so far as may lie in his power, to execute that to which he has bound himself. No one in his senses will say that it is unlawful to persuade Jews to bind themselves by vow or oath to be baptized.

The fourth contention of our opponents is, that sometimes, those who have bound themselves, by oath or vow, to go into religion, lapse, and, falling into despair, abandon themselves to all manner of iniquity; and thus they become the children of hell, twofold more than they who led them to become religious. This objection is answered by St. Paul, "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" (*Rom. iii.* 3). From which words we are to conclude, that the fact that some men abuse grace, is not detrimental to the perseverance of others in good. The Gloss says, on this passage, that the refusal of certain Jews to believe, in no wise hinders others of their nation, from

accepting what God has promised to His faithful. In the same way, the fact that certain men, after taking a vow or an oath to embrace the religious life, change their minds, and become worse than they were before, is no hindrance to others, who, having taken a vow, persevere in its accomplishment. Therefore, they who persuade men to make a vow to become religious, do not, so far as they are concerned, make them children of hell, but rather children of the Kingdom; since the number of those who persevere is greater than that of those who fall away.

It is, nevertheless, possible (though God forbid it!) that they may, as appears by the exposition of St. Jerome and St. Chrysostom, by their bad example, lead those whom they influence into sin. Our argument seems to be supported by the words of St. Paul (1 *Tim. v.* 11), "But the younger widows avoid," an exhortation for which he gives the following reason: "Having damnation, because they have made void their first faith," whereby, that is, they pledged themselves before God to continence. But, as St. Jerome says in his epistle *De monogamia ad Agerunchiam*, on account of those who have committed fornication against Christ their Spouse, the Apostle desires them to marry again, preferring a second marriage to fornication. For it is much better to be a wife for a second time, than to have commerce with a debauchee or with many adulterers. But St. Paul does not, on this account, forbid young widows to make a simple vow of continency—nay he rather commends such a practice, saying, "it is good for them if they so continue," *i.e.* in their widowhood (1 Cor. vii. 8)—but he forbids widows who are living in wantonness to be assisted by the alms of the Church. "But the younger

widows avoid, for when they have grown wanton in Christ they will marry" (1 *Tim. v.* 11).

As for the sixth argument, namely, that some men who have made vows to go into religion, have, nevertheless, remained in the world and become good bishops, it is patently contrary to fact. In the decree of Innocent, which treats of vows and their accomplishments, we find the following passage, "Thou dost state in thy letters to Us, that thou didst make a solemn vow, in the church of Grenoble, to assume the religious habit, and that thou didst further promise, in the hands of the Bishop of the same church, to fulfil this vow within the period of two months, on thy return from the Apostolic See. Nevertheless, heedless that the time for accomplishing thy promise has expired, thou, although unfaithful to a vow, hast been called to the government of the Church of Geneva. We counsel thee, then, that, if thou desirest to give peace to thy conscience, thou shouldest renounce the see, and shouldest pay to the Most High thy vows." Hence, it is plain, that a man who has vowed to go into religion, cannot, with a good conscience, retain a bishopric or an archdeaconate; and should he retain it, he would be, not a good bishop or archdeacon, but a traitor to his vow.

The next contention, viz. that men should not be bribed to enter religion, is answered by the very chapter quoted in support of it. For it declares, that, "unless someone has the intention of feeding the poor, no one of any profession whatsoever, is to be refused maintenance." Hence it appears that the practice of providing burses for poor scholars, and of supporting them during their studies, in order that they may be more fit to enter religion, is by no means to be con-

demned. Neither is it unlawful to bestow some material benefit upon a man, in order that he may be encouraged, by such a favour, to do better; but it would be unlawful to enter into a compact, or agreement, with him. Hence, in the same chapter, it is laid down, that all compacts and agreements must be avoided. Were it unlawful to encourage persons to spiritual good, by means of material assistance, the custom, prevalent in certain churches, of giving a largesse to those who assist at the divine office, would be unjustifiable.

The eighth argument, viz. that it leads to unfaithfulness to persuade young persons to adopt such painful practices as fasting, watching, and the like, contains a fallacy which may easily be detected. For those who are received to the religious life, or who are bound by vow to enter it, are, from the very outset, shown its hardships. It does not lead men to unfaithfulness, if, in order to persuade them to embrace a life whose sufferings are manifest, we, after the example of Christ, hold out to them the prospect of spiritual consolations. "Take my yoke upon you," said Our Lord, "and learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your soul" (*Matt. xi.* 29). In these words, physical labour is symbolised by the "yoke," and spiritual consolation by the "rest" promised to those that bear it. Hence St. Augustine, in his book *De verbis Domini*, says, "They who bravely submit to the yoke of the Lord, undergo such dangers and difficulties, that they appear to be called, not from labour to rest, but from rest to labour. But the Holy Spirit who is with them, by the abundance of heavenly delights, and the hope of future blessedness, sweetens all present bitterness,

and lightens all present loads." Therefore, they who judge that men deceive themselves by undertaking hardships for Christ's sake, merely show that they have had no experience of heavenly delights.

The ninth argument is quite irrelevant to the matter in hand. The statute of Pope Innocent which is quoted, refers to solemn vows made at professions, not to simple vows, whereby people bind themselves, out of devotion, to go into religion.

The tenth objection, viz., that parents can annul the vows of children not yet arrived at the age of puberty, carries no weight. For the fact that an engagement may be broken, does not make such an engagement sinful. It would be equally reasonable to say, that whatsoever minors, that is persons under twenty-five years of age,[1] may do, to the detriment of their own interest, is unlawful, because anything that they lose can be completely restored to them. Hence, children commit no sin by taking a vow to go into religion, or by assuming the religious habit without their parents' permission, even though such vows can be annulled. Were they to commit sin by taking such vows, the fact would be noted by the Canons, which grant faculties to parents to dissolve the vows of children.

The eleventh argument which rests upon quotations from the decretals *de apparatu*, and from the *Summae* of the jurists, Raymund and Goffin, does not bear upon our point. The passages quoted refer to the *solemn* vow which makes a person a religious or a professed member of some order. Doctors of Canon law held different opinions about their vow, although it would seem inconsistent and ridiculous for professors of sacred

[1] According to the *jus Romanum*, or ancient Roman law, all, of either sex, under the ge of twenty-five, are MINORS.—EDITOR.

learning to quote as authorities the little glosses of jurists, or to make them a basis of argument.

The twelfth objection, that, namely, which concerns oaths, is likewise irrelevant; for the Canons do not forbid children to take oaths; they only prohibit their being obliged to do so.

The fallacy contained in the thirteenth argument is easily detected. Children are bound by that profession of Christian faith which they have chosen in the Sacrament of Baptism. Therefore, they may be bound anew, and can make a further choice of the state of perfection. This, however, is not a very correct way of speaking, since, in Baptism children receive the Christian religion, and are bound again to God, making afresh their choice of Him from whom the sin of our first parents had separated them.

Finally, the profane conclusion whereby these objections end, and which accuses children of folly, is an affront to pious ears. Who would presume to blame the holy child St. Benedict, because, in his desire to please God alone, he left his father's house, and sought for holy conversation and a solitary dwelling? Who, but a heretic, would blaspheme against St. John the Baptist, of whom we are told (*Luke i.* 80) that, "the child grew and was strengthened in spirit: and he was in the desert until the day of his manifestation to Israel"? Such presumptuous words show, that they who speak them, are carnal men, who reckon as folly, that which is of the spirit of God. St. Ambrose says, in his commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, "The Holy Spirit is not limited to age, nor extinguished by death, nor shut out by the womb." St. Gregory in his *homilia Pentecostes*, likewise says, "He fills the harp-playing youth, and makes of him a Psalmist: He fills

the herdsman who was uprooting a fig tree, and makes of him a Prophet: He fills the abstemious youth, and makes of him a venerable judge: He fills the fisherman, and makes of him a preacher: He fills the persecutor, and makes of him a teacher of the nations: He fills the publican, and makes of him an Evangelist." I will further quote the words of St. Paul (*1st Cor. iii.* 18), "If any man among you seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may become wise." For he that is a fool in the wisdom of this world (which is folly in the sight of God) is no fool in the wisdom of God. As we read in the book of Proverbs (*i.* 22), speaking to children, He says, "O children, how long will you love childishness? Turn ye at my reproof: behold I will utter my spirit to you."

CHAPTER XIV

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PERFECTION OF RELIGIOUS WHOSE POSSESSIONS ARE NOT IN COMMON

We must now examine how the adversaries of the religious life seek to withhold men from embracing it, by decrying the perfection of this state, and especially the perfection of those religious whose possessions are not in common. In order to uphold their opinion they quote the following words from Prosper in his book, *De vita contemplativa* (XII. *quaest.* I.), "It behoves us to possess the goods of the Church, and, for the love of poverty, to spurn our own possessions. The property of the Church is not private, but common. Therefore, anyone who has relinquished, or sold, his own belongings, despises private property; but, when he is set over a Church, he becomes the administrator of all the possessions of that Church. St. Paulinus, as is well known, sold his large property and gave the effects to the poor; but, when he became Bishop, far from despising the possessions of his Church, he administered them with the utmost fidelity. This fact is sufficient evidence that we ought to relinquish our private belongings, on account of the imperfection attaching to them, but that it is quite possible (without any detriment to poverty), to possess ecclesiastical property, which is common."

Hence, our adversaries draw the conclusion that it is imperfect not to hold common property.

They maintain their opinion by quoting the example of several Saints. Thus, St. Gregory, with his own money, built one monastery within the walls of Rome, and six in Sicily. St. Benedict, that perfect guide of religious, accepted large donations for his monastery; and many other men, who have been zealous for evangelical perfection, have acted in like manner. These great men, who were zealous seekers after evangelical perfection, would, certainly, not have pursued such a course, had the possession of goods in common, been, in any degree, inconsistent with Apostolic and Evangelical perfection. Our opponents draw from this argument, the further conclusion, that, those who possess nothing, are not, therefore, the most perfect; and they add, that the Apostles, whom Our Lord commanded to possess nothing and to take nothing with them on their way, did, nevertheless, hold certain possessions in time of necessity. Hence, commenting on the words of St. Luke, "But now, he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise a scrip," the Gloss says that, "now, when the hour of death was at hand, and the whole nation were in pursuit of the Shepherd and the flock, Christ gave a rule befitting the occasion, allowing them to take what was necessary for the support of life." Now, the Apostles were no less perfect in time of persecution, than at other seasons. Therefore, the possession of goods in common, did not lessen their perfection.

It is also argued that Christ Himself instituted the order of His disciples, whose successors, bishops, to wit, and clerics, have property. Religious orders, on the other hand, whose members live in poverty with-

out possessions, were formed by men. Now what Christ has instituted must be most perfect. Therefore, it is more perfect to hold goods in common, than to live without property. Our opponents, likewise, (incredible though it may appear), contend that the perfection taught by Christ, has been in abeyance from the Apostolic times until now; and that it is in our days, that certain orders have begun to live without possessing anything in common. The conclusion drawn from this proposition, is, that the absence of common property does not pertain to Evangelical perfection.

Another argument, brought forward by the enemies of the religious life, is, that those who after the time of the Apostles, held no goods in common, lived, as did the Fathers of the desert, by the work of their hands. Therefore, they say, those who neither possess common property, nor live by their manual labour, do not practise Evangelical perfection. They likewise hold, that the counsel of renouncing wealth, was given as a means whereby to free our minds from worldly care, as we learn from St. Luke xii. 22, "Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat," and from St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians (*vii.* 32), "But I would have you to be without solicitude." Now, they who have not sufficient property to provide them with the necessities of life, are more disturbed by anxiety, than those who hold certain possessions in common. Therefore, the absence of common property is an obstacle to Evangelical perfection. It is further maintained, that religious who possess nothing, are compelled to busy themselves in the affairs of those who supply their necessities, and that this solicitude about temporal matters militates against Evangelical

perfection. Therefore, they who possess nothing, are beset by impediments in the way of perfection. Finally, the adversaries of religious poverty say, that it is impossible for anyone to possess nothing in common; for all must have food and clothing, which they could not obtain if they had no property. These are the arguments brought against the perfection of those who own no common property.

CHAPTER XV

REFUTATION OF THE ERRORS QUOTED IN THE LAST CHAPTER

We must remember that the enemies of poverty impugn, not only the teaching, but the life of Our Lord. Christ has taught us both by word and example to observe poverty in all things. St. Paul tells us (2 *Cor. viii.* 9), "that being rich He became poor for our sakes." The Gloss, commenting on these words, says, that, "He took poverty upon Himself, although He did not lose His riches. Interiorly He was rich, exteriorly He was poor. He concealed the treasure of His Godhead, and revealed the poverty of His Manhood." Hence, those who follow Christ in poverty, acquire great dignity, as we shall presently show. "Therefore (the Gloss concludes), let no one despise Him, who, though poor in His dwelling, was rich in conscience. If we consider His life, from His first entry into the world, we shall see that He chose a poor maiden for His Mother, and willed to be needy and in want, and to have for His birthplace the poorest of poor cities. The stable is a monument of His poverty, as we are reminded in a certain address delivered at one of the synods of the Council of Ephesus." "Behold" (we quote part of this address) "the most humble dwelling of Him who enriches Heaven. A crib suffices to Him that sitteth above the Cherubim; and He who has joined the sea

to the dry land is Himself swathed in swaddling bands. Mark His poverty here below; consider the abundance of His riches above." But if Christ, as St. Paul says, had not become poor for our sakes, not for His own, could He not have chosen a wealthy mother, and might He not have been born in His own house? If the abnegation of earthly possessions is of no account in Christian perfection, why should Our Lord have deprived Himself even of a home? Therefore, let the enemies of poverty blush and be silent, while the glory of this virtue radiates from the crib of Christ.

But, lest we may imagine, that, in His more mature years, Our Lord abandoned the poverty which He bore in childhood, let us consider His own words. "The Son of man," He said, "hath not whereon to lay His Head" (*Matt. viii.* 20). St. Jerome makes the following comment on this text, "Christ spoke thus, as if to say: 'Why should you desire to follow me for the sake of gaining worldly pomp and riches, since my poverty is so extreme that I have no dwelling of mine own, and since the roof under which I sleep belongs not to me?'" And St. Chrysostom, writing on the same subject, says, "Observe how Our Lord exemplifies in His deeds, the poverty which He taught by His words. He had neither table nor lanthorn, nor house, nor any such thing." And this poverty, which He preached, both by word and deed, belongs to perfection. Thus we see that the entire abnegation of all earthly possessions forms part of the perfection of the Christian life.

We find a further proof of the poverty practised by Our Lord, in the words which He spoke to St. Peter, concerning the tribute money, "Go to the sea, and cast

in a hook: and that fish which shall first come up, take; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a stater; take that, and give it to them for me and for thee" (*Matt xvii.* 26). In his exposition of this text, St. Jerome says, "These words, understood simply, edify the hearer, showing as they do that the Lord was so poor, that He had not wherewith to pay tribute for Himself and His Apostle."

But, someone may object, how then could Judas carry money in his purse? We answer, that Our Lord considered it criminal to use the money intended for the poor for His own purposes, and that, in this, He has left us an example. But it is clear, and cannot be called in question by any Christian, that Christ practised the most sublime perfection in the tenor of His life, and therefore, He taught the perfection of poverty. "If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor and come, follow me." These words, according to St. Jerome, contain the highest rule of perfection. Therefore it is the perfection of poverty for men, after the example of Christ, to be destitute of all possessions, and only to reserve something for the poor, especially for those dependent upon them. Thus, Our Lord took care of His disciples who had made themselves poor for His sake, reserving for their sustenance something from the things which were given Him.

But, amongst all that Christ did and suffered during His mortal life, the example of His most holy Cross is, above all other things, proposed to Christians for their imitation. He Himself says, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (*Matt. xvi.* 24). St. Paul also, speaking as though crucified with Christ, and exulting

only in His Cross, says (Gal. vi. 17), "I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body," being a diligent follower of the example of the Cross. Now, amongst all that is conspicuous in the Cross, poverty is everywhere apparent. So utter, indeed, was the destitution of Our Lord upon the Cross, that He suffered even bodily nakedness and exclaims in the person of the Psalmist (*xxi.* 19), "They parted my garments amongst them, and upon my vesture they cast lots." Now, men imitate this nakedness of the Cross, by voluntary poverty, especially when they renounce the revenues of their possessions. Thus, St. Jerome, writing to the priest Paulinus, says, "Now that thou hast heard the counsel of Our Saviour: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and come follow Me,' do thou put His words into practice, and, stripped of all things, follow the nakedness of the Cross. So shalt thou more easily and more speedily scale Jacob's ladder." A little further on, he adds, "It is no great thing for a man to wear a sad and pallid countenance, to make a display of fasting, and to wear a beggarly cloak, if, at the same time, he draw a princely income from his property." Hence, we see, how truly those are enemies of the Cross of Christ, who impugn poverty, and, savouring earthly things, deem that material possessions tend to Christian perfection, and that the abnegation of such possessions detracts from such perfection.

Now, that we have considered certain points in the life of Christ, in His birth, in His manhood, and in His death upon the Cross, let us proceed to reflect upon His teaching. In the instruction which He gave both to His disciples and to the multitudes, He began with poverty as a foundation, "Blessed are the poor in

spirit" (*Matt. v.* 3). St. Jerome thus explains these words, "By the poor in spirit, are to be understood they, who, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, have the will to be poor." As St. Ambrose says, on the Gospel of St. Luke: "Both the Evangelists mention the beatitude of poverty in the first place. And, indeed, poverty is the first in order of virtues, and the mother and producer of all others. For, he that spurns earthly riches shall merit such as are eternal, neither can he deserve to receive the reward of the Kingdom of Heaven, who is possessed by the spirit of covetousness."

St. Basil further shows us in these words, what is specially meant by poverty of spirit. "Blessed," he says, "is he who is poor as a true disciple of Christ, who bore poverty for us. For the Lord Himself accomplished every work that leads to perfection, giving Himself as an example to them that will learn of Him." Now, we never read that Christ owned any possessions. Therefore poverty is no hindrance to the perfection of such as desire to renounce what they possess, for the love of Christ; on the contrary such poverty greatly increases their perfection. Hence, when our Lord was sending forth His twelve chosen Apostles to preach, and when He had given them the power to perform miracles, He impressed upon them, as their first rule of life, the exercise of poverty, saying, "Do not possess gold nor silver, nor money in your purses, nor scrip for your journey" (*Matt. x.* 9). Thus, as Eusebius of Caesaraea says, "He forbade them the present use of gold, silver, or brass, and also solicitude for their future needs. For he knew that they who were to be healed by the Apostles, and delivered by them from the violence of their passions,

would share their goods with them." Eusebius further adds, that "Our Lord judged it meet, that they who were attracted by heavenly riches, should despise earthly pelf, and should possess neither gold, nor silver, nor any other of the property valued by men, but should esteem the heavenly treasures, wherewith they were endowed, as worth more than all such things. Therefore, He made them soldiers of the Kingdom of Heaven, and bade them cherish poverty."

"No soldier of God, who desires to please Him, entangles himself in the affairs of this life." Hence, St. Jerome, commenting on the Gospel of St. Matthew, says, "He, who, in the foregoing words, had forbidden the Apostles to possess riches, now almost prohibits them from providing themselves with the necessaries of life, in order that they, the teachers of true religion, who were trained to believe that all things were ordered by the Providence of God, should show that they themselves took no thought for the morrow." Again, St. Chrysostom, writing on the Gospel of St. Matthew, observes, "Our Lord, by this precept, first frees his disciples from bondage to riches; secondly, He delivers them from all solicitude, in order that they may give their entire attention to the word of God; thirdly, He teaches them His virtue. Thus, then, the precepts of the Gospel point out to us what manner of man he ought to be who preaches the Kingdom of God. He ought to be one who seeks not the support of material assistance, but, relying entirely on his Faith, reflects that the less he strives after these material things, the more God can supply him with them." St. Ambrose speaks thus, in his commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, "It is evident, that, if the Apostles had accepted property, they would have been not less, but far more,

open to suspicion, than if they had owned gold and silver; for, it would have been thought, that they preached for the sake of what they could gain. They would, likewise, have been far more occupied with anxiety about the cultivation of their fields. For land or vineyards are a far greater source of material profit than are moveable chattels."

It is evident, then, from these expositions, that the Apostles were forbidden to possess lands, vineyards, or any other fixed property. But who, save a heretic, would say that the first instruction of the disciples given them by Christ Himself, was contrary to the principles of evangelical perfection? They, therefore, who say that it is less perfect for religious orders to be destitute of common property, are falsifying the doctrine of the Faith.

But we must, finally, consider in what manner these precepts of Our Lord were observed by the Apostles. For, as St. Augustine says in his book *Contra mendacium:* "Holy Scripture contains not only the divine precepts, but also the life and conduct of the just; in order that, if, by any chance we may be uncertain how some commandment is to be understood, we may be enlightened by studying the example of holy men." Now we know, that before the Passion, the Apostles possessed nothing and carried no provision on their journeys. St. Luke (*xxii.* 35) reports that Our Lord said to them, "when I sent you without purse, or scrip, or shoes, did you want anything? But they said, 'nothing.'" Immediately afterwards, however, "Then said He unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a scrip." It might appear as if Christ, in these words, entirely rescinded His former precept; but the dispensation was only a temporary

one, granted on account of impending persecution. Venerable Bede says, "He does not govern His disciples by the same rule in the time of persecution, as in the time of peace. When He sent them to preach, He forbade them to take anything with them on the way; for it was His ordinance that they that preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. When, however, the danger of death was imminent, and the whole nation was persecuting the Shepherd and the flock, He gave to His disciples a rule befitting the time, allowing them to provide themselves with the necessaries of life, until such time as the fury of their persecutors should be appeased, and a convenient season for preaching the Gospel should return. Hereby He also teaches us that, for certain just causes, we may, without sin, somewhat relax the severity of our customary exercises." We also see, that absolute renunciation of earthly possessions forms part of the rigour of evangelical discipline.

If we enquire as to the manner in which, after the Passion, the Apostles observed this precept, and how they taught their successors to keep it, we shall find information in the fourth Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, where we read, "And the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul: neither did any one say that aught of the things he possessed was his own; but all things were common unto them." It cannot be held that they possessed common property, such as lands or vineyards or anything of the kind, for in the same chapter of the Acts we read, "For as many as were owners of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the Apostles." It is thus made clear, that the rule of the evangelical life was that the

necessaries of life were possessed in common, and that property was absolutely resigned by its owners. St. Augustine points out, in his book *De doctrina christiana*, that this practice is conducive to the highest perfection. "The believers among the Jewish nation," he says, "who formed the first Church, to wit that of Jerusalem, proved most abundantly, how advantageous it was for them to have grown up under the schoolmaster, viz., the Law. For they were so evidently under the influence of the Holy Spirit, that they sold all their possessions, and laid the price at the feet of the Apostles, to be distributed among the poor. We do not" (he continues) "find the same fact noted of any Church of the Gentiles; for they who had worshipped false gods, made by hands, were not found so open to the Holy Ghost."

Pope Melchiades, however, assigns a different reason for the same fact. In XII., quaest. I. he says, "The Apostles, foreseeing that the future Church would be founded among the Gentiles, did not acquire much property from the Jews, but only money for the sustenance of the needy. Now, however, amidst much storm and stress, the Church gradually acquired a footing in the world, and it came to pass that, not only entire nations, but even the Roman emperors, the rulers of the whole earth, flocked to profess the Faith of Christ and to receive Baptism. Constantine, that most religious prince, was the first to give permission, not only for his subjects to become Christians, but also for Churches to be erected; and he ordained that certain land should be given up to this purpose." In the following chapter, Pope Urban says, "The High Priests and Levites, and others, and the rest of the faithful, saw that it would be more profitable, if the bishops

were to make over to the churches which they governed the lands and other property which was customarily sold. By means of the charges on these estates, the Bishops would be able, both at the present time, and in the future, to provide, more abundantly and conveniently, for the needs of the faithful, living a common life, than they could have done by the sums realised from the sale of the property. Therefore, they began to assign to the mother churches the landed property which they had hitherto sold; and they lived on the income derived from it."

Hence, we see that it is better to have land in common, rather than chattels which can be sold, to procure the necessaries of life. Land was sold in the primitive Church, not because the Apostles esteemed that to be the best course, but because they foresaw, that the Church would have no permanence among the Jews, partly on account of their infidelity, and partly because of the ruin which was to overwhelm their nation. The apparent inconsistency of these arrangements disappears, when we attentively consider the state of the case. For, in the early days of the Church, all her members were as holy as the most perfect of her children in later days. Therefore, the Church had, in the order both of nature and of grace, to lay her foundations among the perfect; and consequently the Apostles ordained a mode of life consonant with perfection. St. Jerome, in his book De illustribus viris, says, "It seems as if the Church had been such a Chrysostom of believers, as monks now endeavour and strive to be. Nothing was the private property of anyone; amongst them were neither rich nor poor; patrimonies were divided amongst the needy; and men devoted themselves to

prayer, to perfect doctrine, and to continence." This perfect mode of life was practised among the primitive believers, not only in Judaea under the Apostle, but also in Egypt, under St. Mark the Evangelist. This we learn from St. Jerome, and also from Book II. of the Ecclesiastical History.

In process of time, however, many were to enter the Church who would not live up to this standard of perfection. This was not to be the case before the dispersion of the Jews, but afterwards, when the Church was disseminated among the Gentiles. When this state of things came to pass, the prelates of the Churches judged that landed property might advantageously be bestowed upon the churches, and this not, as before, for the sake of the perfect, but on account of the weaker brethren who could not attain to the perfection of the earlier Christians. But there were, nevertheless, both at that time, and later, certain men who were zealous for primitive perfection, and who, like the monks of Egypt, gathered themselves into congregations and renounced all possessions. St. Gregory (*Dial. III.*) mentions a certain holy Isaac, who, coming from Syria into Italy, practised in the West the perfection which he had learned in the East. His disciples would frequently humbly beseech him to accept, for the use of the monastery, the property offered to him; but, anxious to preserve his property inviolate, he made the decisive reply that *a monk seeking earthly possessions is no monk.* This saying cannot be understood to refer to private property, since we are told that what was offered to Isaac, was pressed on him for the use of his monastery. Neither is it to be inferred that all monks who hold possessions in common are deficient in religious perfection. The

words of Isaac were instigated by his fear of his failing in the virtue of poverty, a danger which threatens many religious who own property in common. For, as St. Jerome says in his epitaph on Nepotian to the Bishop Heliodorus, "Some men are richer as religious, than they were as laymen. Now that they belong to Christ the Poor, they own wealth which they never possessed when they belonged to Satan the opulent; and the Church mourns over the riches of those, whom the world formerly regarded as beggars." Hence, St. Gregory speaking of St. Isaac, says, "He feared to lose the treasure of his poverty, just as a miser fears to lose his hoard of perishable wealth, and the Lord, to manifest his holiness, has glorified him." For, as St. Gregory tells us further on, "he became known far and wide for his spirit of prophecy and his great gift of miracles." Hence it is evident, that the absence of any possessions either common or private, is for some men the path to sublime perfection.

We shall understand this more clearly, if we examine the motive underlying the counsels pertaining to evangelical perfection. These counsels are given in order that, by their means, men may be delivered from earthly solicitude, and thus be more free to serve God. St. Paul tells us as much, when he gives the counsel concerning virginity, "He that is without a wife, is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife, is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife: and he is divided" (1 *Cor. vii.* 32). Hence we see that the more any course of action delivers us from worldly anxiety, so much the more does it pertain to evangelical perfection. Now, it is clear that the possession of wealth and property distracts

the soul from divine things, for, to use Our Lord's simile, "He that received the seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choketh up the word, and he becometh fruitless" (*Matt. xiii.* 18). St. Jerome's commentary on these words runs as follows: "Riches are flatterers, promising one thing and doing another. Their possession is most uncertain: for when they are carried hither and thither and seem likely to endure, they desert their owners, or rejoice those who previously possessed them not."

The same thing is taught us in the parable of the supper (*Luke xiv.* 18), where one of the invited guests is represented as excusing himself from attendance by the words, "I have bought a farm, and I must needs go out and see it." "What," asks St. Gregory, "are we to understand by this farm except material possessions? That man, then, goes out to see his farm, who thinks of nought but exterior things." At the end of the parable the master of the supper says to his servants, "Bring in hither the poor and the feeble." Commenting on which, St. Ambrose observes that, "he who lacks the enjoyments of sin, sins more rarely; and he who has no worldly pleasures is more easily converted to God." Thus we see, that the entire absence of property and wealth of any kind, leads to evangelical perfection. St. Augustine, likewise, says in his book *De verbis Domini*, "The little ones of Christ are they that have renounced all things, and have followed Him. All that they had, they have given to the poor, in order to serve God, free from any earthly tie. Being thus delivered from the burdens of the world, they soar upwards, as if on wings. They are little because they are humble; but weigh them, and

thou wilt find them very heavy." Now, no sane person can say that the care of common property is not a worldly care. Therefore, it adds to their perfection, when men serve God freed from such shackles.

Hence we see, that those who teach that the renunciation of common property for the love of Christ, does not pertain to perfection, are inculcating a most dangerous error, and spreading an opinion completely at variance with Christian doctrine. The Gloss on the verse of Psalm vi., "Let them be turned back, and ashamed very speedily," says, "This fate does not befall the sinner in this world, where, on the contrary, the workers of iniquity mock and put to the blush the little ones of Christ who have renounced all things for His sake." Rather do the following words of Psalm xiii. 6, seem to apply to them, "You have confounded the counsel of the poor man, but the Lord is his hope." The Gloss thus comments on this verse, "The needy is any member of Christ; and you have acted thus towards him, because the Lord is his hope." That very reason which ought to make you revere him, only causes you so much the more to despise him. For what else do these men do, save endeavour to contemn those who follow, in its perfection, the counsel of Christian poverty? And why do they despise them, except because their hope is established, not in earthly possessions, but in God?

CHAPTER XVI

AN ANSWER TO THE ARGUMENTS WHICH ARE BROUGHT FORWARD AGAINST THE PROPOSITIONS CONTAINED IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTER

After what has been already premised, it will be easy to answer the objections of those who maintain an opinion contrary to ours, and who hold that it is expedient to own property in common. It is certainly well to do so, for the sake of those who are not capable of that height of perfection practised by the faithful of the early Church, amongst whom, however, the imperfect were not wholly neglected. Thus, although they who followed sublime perfection did not own any property; yet, even Our Lord, to whom the angels ministered, kept a purse for the necessities of others, and because His Church was to possess funds, as St. Augustine says in his commentary on St. John's Gospel. Therefore, if there be any congregation of which every member aspires to the highest perfection, it is expedient for such a congregation to own no possessions.

When, in the next place, it is stated that St. Benedict received ample possessions during his lifetime, this only proves that the possession of common property does not make monastic perfection absolutely im-

possible. It is no proof whatsoever that it is not more perfect to renounce possessions altogether, especially as St. Benedict declares, in his Rule, that he had, in condescension to the weakness of the monks of his time, mitigated in certain particulars, the rigour of the monastic life as it was ordained by earlier Fathers. The same remark applies to St. Gregory, who built monasteries, according to the rule drawn up by St. Benedict.

The third argument, viz., that Our Lord allowed His apostles to take with them in time of persecution purse and scrip, tells rather against our opponents, than for them. If, in the time of persecution, the rule was suspended, it proves that the ordinary rule was, that the apostles should take with them neither purse nor scrip. We do not read that in time of persecution the Apostles procured for themselves any possessions in common. Thus the argument of their conduct during persecution is irrelevant to our subject.

The fourth assertion, viz., that Our Lord did not establish an order of men, possessing nothing, but an order of prelates who owned certain property, is a distinct falsehood. For when Our Lord taught His disciples to possess neither gold, nor silver, lest their hearts should be weighed down by temporal anxieties; and when He promised to those who, for His sake, should renounce lands and houses, a reward, not only in the next world but in this life also, so that they should resemble the Apostles in "having nothing yet possessing all things," He made it clear, that all who should hereafter follow this rule, would be obeying His ordinance. Those who follow the saints who have founded religious orders, are, in reality, imitating not

those holy founders but Christ, whose precepts they preach. Our adversaries are either deceived on another point, or else they try to mislead us. Christ did not establish an order of bishops, or other clerics, who were to own property, either in common or individually. He established such an order, indeed, but established it in perfect poverty. Later on, however, possessions were accepted by the Church, in order, as we have seen, to be distributed by her.

As for the fifth assertion, viz., that Christian perfection has been in abeyance from the time of the Apostles until our own days, it is certain, on the contrary, that far from being in abeyance, Christian perfection has flourished vigorously, both in Egypt and in other parts of the world. No man can set limits to God, or say that He is to draw all men to Himself at the same time, or in the same place; rather does He, according to the wisdom whereby He disposes all things sweetly, provide, at divers seasons, the aids to man's salvation, peculiarly befitting those times. Has Christian teaching failed from the days of the masters and the doctors, Athanasius, Basil, Ambrose, Augustine, and the rest, until our times, in which men are even better instructed than they formerly were, in Christian doctrine? Is it, according to the views of our opponents, unlawful to set again in motion any good work which for a while has been interrupted? If such be the case, it would be unlawful to suffer martyrdom, or to work miracles, since both these good works have, for a time, been in abeyance.

The sixth argument, viz. that those who possessed no common property, used to live by the work of their hands, is a calumny against others as well as against

religious; for, the Apostle who preached the Gospel, maintained himself by manual labour. Is it a sin, then, for Bishops, Archdeacons, and all who are officially bound to preach the Gospel, not to live by the work of their hands? If they are not bound thus to maintain themselves, because St. Paul laboured not out of necessity, but as a work of supererogation, why should that work be enforced upon religious, which was only supererogatory with the holy Fathers? No one can fulfil all works of supererogation; for one thing is superfluous in one man, and another in another man. But, granted that it be not supererogatory, but necessary, that they who own no common property, should live by the work of their hands, that necessity only extends to such labour as may prevent idleness. But idleness is prevented, not only by manual labour, but far more by the study of Holy Scripture; such idleness performs a great work, as St. Augustine says. And the Gloss, on the words of Ps. xlviii., "My eyes have failed," etc., says, "He is not idle who only studies the word of God; neither does he accomplish more who performs external work, than he who exercises himself in the knowledge of divinity. For, wisdom is of all works the greatest."

Idleness is, also, prevented by the warfare which we wage against the enemies of the Faith, according to St. Paul's injunction: "Labour like a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 *Tim. ii.* 3). This the Gloss interprets to mean, the preaching of the Gospel against the enemies of the Faith. This I acknowledge to be a necessary work, for those who have not otherwise a means of subsistence. For it is lawful for all preachers of the Gospel, even Monks, to live by the Gospel, and

by their ministry at the Altar. St. Augustine in his book *De opere monachorum* asks, whether it be permissible for Monks to have any common property, save what they gain by their own labour. Is it not ridiculous to say, that religious may receive large possessions as alms, and yet may not accept donations, to provide for their simple daily needs? Therefore, no necessity constrains those who do not possess common property, to labour with their hands. We have, however, elsewhere spoken more fully on this point.[1]

The seventh argument deserves ridicule, rather than reply. For, who does not see, that the task of heaping up riches—a task which seculars can barely achieve—involves far more anxiety of mind, than that of merely procuring from the charity of the faithful, and the mercy of God, a simple daily provision for the necessities of life.

As for the eighth argument, viz., that religious must occupy themselves about the affairs of those who minister to them, I acknowledge that this is true. But the affairs about which they must be busied, are such as concern the spiritual welfare of their benefactors, or their consolation when they are in trouble. Such solicitude is a work of charity, by no means incompatible with religion. For, as St. James says, "Religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the orphan and the widow in their tribulation" (*Ep. i.* 27.)

The last argument is absolutely worthless. For, the things used by religious for their support, are not absolutely their own property, or under their own control, but are ministered to them for their necessities by those who have the management of such things.

[1] See page 144 in the first part of this volume.—EDITOR.

This is all that occurs to me, at present, to write against the pernicious and erroneous teaching, which deters men from entering religious life. If any man desire to contradict my words, let him not do so by chattering before boys, but let him write, and publish his writings; so that intelligent persons may judge what is true, and may be able to confute what is false by the authority of the Truth.

THE END

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